

Ann Barker
PRUDENTIAL
REFLECTIONS,
MORAL
CONSIDERATIONS,
Edward J. And *Barker*
STOICAL MAXIMES.

IN THREE CENTURIES:

Written Originally in the
Spanish Tongue, and thence
put into *French*, by a R. F.
of the *Society*.

English'd by *J. D.* of *Kidwelly*.



L O N D O N,
Printed by *J. Cotterel*, for *R. Robinson*, near
Grays Inne-gate in *Holborn*. 1674. 1

8405. a 60

L. G. June 23. 1805.

L. G.



BRITISH MUSEUM



Licensed,

Jan. 3. 167 $\frac{1}{4}$.

Roger L'Estrange.



And Barker
PRUDENTIAL
REFLECTIONS,
MORAL
CONSIDERATIONS,
Edward J. And *Barker*
STOICAL MAXIMES.

IN THREE CENTURIES:

Written Originally in the
Spanish Tongue, and thence
put into *French*, by a R. F.
of the *Society*.

English'd by *J. D.* of *Kidwelly*.



L O N D O N,
Printed by *Ja: Cotterel*, for *R. Robinson*, near
Grays Inne-gate in *Holborn*. 1674. 1



de
pa
if
tu
m
co
his
th
thi
dis
ma
for
and
ma
nor



PRUDENTIAL
REFLECTIONS.

I.

OF all Masters, Experience is the most expert in teaching us to become wise and Prudent. Nor does it cost a man much pains to acquire that precious quality, if he does but reflect on the misfortunes of others, since it is no hard matter for him to learn Wit at their cost. He who can seasonably make his advantage of *Occasion*, has attain'd the perfect knowledge of the use of things. *That* discovers to us the difference there is between a wise man, and him who is not such. The former perceives it at a great distance, and with constancy expects, that he may not let it slip; the other sees it not, as they say, but by the back-

C.

O. B. 52

side,

[Handwritten signature or mark]

side, and when indeed it is quite gone.

I I.

THe greatest art of Prudence does not consist so much in minding the present, as in well considering the future. It is commonly said of a sort of people, who take upon them to foretel things to come, that their eyes are so piercing, as to see even through Stone-walls, nay what is under ground: but it is certain, that a man truly-wise and prudent, does, with the lights of his mind, discover what may be most conceal'd in the times yet to come. He never lets slip the remembrance of things past; he frugally husbands the present time, and without any disquiet provides for the future.

I I I.

HE who would arrive to the highest pitch of Wisdom and
Pru-

Prudence with the assistance of any Master besides himself, must always accuse himself, and diligently examine, whether he be not chargeable with the same faults which he condemns in others. A man becomes in a short time Master of himself, when he makes use of other mens imperfections, as an impartial mirror, to discover his own.

IV.

R Eason ought to illuminate all our actions. We should not do that which is good purely out of inclination, nor yet punish out of passion. Never give order for the chastising of any one, while you are angry; nor bethink your self of rewarding, while you are transported with joy. Not but that you may conceive a pleasure in obliging; but it is not any way requisite, that joy and pleasure should be the distributors of benefits.

V.

Not to rely too much on Fortune, and always to consult Prudence, is a secure way for a man to be successful in what he undertakes. It argues a greater ability of parts not to prove successful with good advice, than for a man to compass his designs with temerity.

VI.

Secrecy is but the key of Prudence. He who communicates his secrets to one single person, has no reason to complain of all the worlds knowing of them: If you are desirous that a thing should not be known to many, discover it not to any one. To little purpose does a man confide in his Neighbour, when he betrays himself.

VII.

A Fool, while he is silent, gains esteem; and a wise man does yet make a stronger settlement of his
repute.

repute. Men run no hazard, and sometimes gain much, when they are cautelous and reserv'd in speaking: but it is ever dangerous, to speak much; and the most accomplish'd person in the world makes an abatement of his reputation by an over-flux of discourse.

VIII.

You should never say any thing to others, but what you are very well assur'd of your self: for if it be a thing wherein a Grandee, or some other rich and powerful person is concern'd, question not but what you have told another, as a secret, will be immediately known: They who make it their work to humour the great and the wealthy, read even the thoughts of other men; and so he to whom you have only discover'd your suspicion, will be sure to make pass for a truth what you haply had not yet thoroughly imagin'd.

I X.

IT is a fortunate fault, nay indeed of very great advantage, to speak commendably of all sorts of persons. There is not so much reason to call those flatterers, who commend not only the rich and the great, but also speak well of the absent, and of such as are in misery and affliction.

X.

A Man gains the esteem of all people, when he wisely governs his Tongue; and he will reap this advantage thereby, that no body will be apt to speak evil of him, who speaks well of all sorts of persons.

X I.

THere are some persons, who, out of Prudence, are very desirous to seem well-satisfy'd, though they are not really so. By that artifice would they ingratiate themselves with

with those on whom they have a dependance, giving their approbation, with a thousand Elogies, to whatever those persons cherish. Yet after all, a man is no loser by expressing his respects for that which another highly esteems; and it is less dangerous to commend the furniture of a man's House, and the rarities of his Closet, than to speak well of his person, when there is no occasion for it.

XII.

A Man accuses himself too hastily, when he is over-forward to make satisfaction. It argues imprudence in any one to condemn himself, while there appears no body against him: it is then timely enough to answer, and to alledge ones reasons, when he himself is examin'd, and others would be inform'd of the thing in debate. If you conceive the complaint which is to be made, to be of some importance, Prudence requires

that you should prevent the consequences, and that by the most plausible excuses you have, satisfy, if possible, the person who thinks himself disoblig'd. But if you are assur'd, that there is no cause of complaining of you, do not so much as think of justifying your self; for that were to give greater weight and force to the complaint, which they seem desirous to frame against you.

XIII.

TIs better to receive an injury, than to hear a flattery with pleasure. Nay, I maintain, that it is not possible for one man to outrage another more cruelly, than by beguiling him, and shewing a desire to deprive him of his judgment. Shut your ears equally against flatterers who excessively commend, and detractors who revile others without any cause.

Reflections.

67
9

XIV.

WHen a powerful man shall say any thing to you that is harsh and disobliging, discover not your resentment thereof, but be perswaded on the contrary, that he has done you a pleasure, and that it is a favour you have receiv'd from him. It should seem that the words of such persons have a privilege, and a particular character, which those of other men have not. Hope not therefore ever to get any satisfaction of them. Nay I should not advise you to take it, though you might easily do so. Suffer him therefore to speak freely, in whose power it is to make you a partaker of his favours, and of whom you may one time or other stand in need.

XV.

THere is nothing more opposite to true Prudence, than that Maxime of State, which directs us to do

evil to those of whom we have receiv'd any, so to frighten others, and to make them know by experience, that they shall not be more gently treated, if they attack us. Thus is it that a man hides his passion under the Veil of Prudence. It is much more easie to acquire many friends by meekness and an observance of *decorum*, than to preserve some by fear.

XVI.

IT is a most dangerous thing to be unwilling to pardon. Despair makes men attempt strange things. My meaning is, that that person has but slightly offended you; but if he must be your irreconcilable enemy, and that his malice must last always, he will be in a capacity to injure you much, and in time he will draw in divers others to assist him in the revenge he intends to take. 'Tis a rare sight to see that man chang'd whom

Reflections.

77

whom passion had put besides himself, who is not afraid of any thing, and hearkens not either to his friends, or the devoir incumbent on him.

XVII.

YOU have no ground at all to complain of the wrong which some man has done you, since you put your confidence in him, knowing that he had been injurious to others, and had deceiv'd them. You have but too much cause to be distrustful of him after that experience; yet do so without his perceiving of it.

XVIII.

FLATTER not your self that people speak sincerely, when they say the most obliging things in the world of you; it suffices that you believe it when they come to the effects of those sayings. We finde many persons who speak no ill of any one, and yet they do no good to any body.

A

A man should endeavour to guess rightly of the flatteries, which ought to make an experience for the future, and not give them credit but answerably to the effect, wherewith we saw them attended at first.

XIX.

IT is certainly a dangerous thing to offend a man of eminent quality, and one who has an advantage over you; yet is there more danger to have any difference with his real friend; inasmuch as he thinks his reputation wounded, when any one has a pique against him, whose breast he makes the treasury of all his secrets; and therefore it will be a greater trouble to him to forget that injury, than it would be, if he were attack'd in his own person. A generous man is ordinarily satisfy'd, when he sees himself in a capacity to chastise the person who had injur'd him; but it is not an easie matter for him

him to give a check to his resentment, when he reflects on the obligation he has to revenge his friend. He may haply conceive, that it argues a certain meanness of spirit ; or at least some weakness in him, to revenge himself ; but he thinks that as well his honour as his duty engage him to take satisfaction for the affront done his friend.

X X.

IT costs a man dear to affront a person of high rank. All the submissions in the world, and the most real services one can do, will not be able sometimes to dash out of his mind the remembrance of the injury he hath receiv'd. No man but looks upon Honour as a thing of right belonging to him, and accordingly must have a great aversion for contempt. In fine, it is manifest, that a man is more troubled to see himself sleighted, than he is transported with joy when he receives the greatest honours.

X X I.

THe great Master-piece of humane life consists in the supporting of the evils that happen. Patience is the most solid ground-work of Vertue, and men cannot arrive to a real greatness of mind, but by extraordinary sufferings. There is not requir'd so much courage to attack a dreadful enemy, as to endure a change of Fortune, or some other disastrous accident with patience.

X X I I.

They who know how to judge impartially, make perfect valour to consist in a self-conquest. Kings, who with powerful Armies gain Battels, and take Cities, are oblig'd for their Lawrels to the gallant performances of their Captains and Soldiers; whereas a true *Heroe*, who has master'd his passions, is indebted only to his own valour for that glorious victory.

XXIII.

XXIII.

A Wicked person is capable of affronting any one; but it belongs only to a great Soul to sleight it, and to forbear all discovery of the least resentment thereof. To do evil to others is the easiest thing in the world, but to endure it generously and without repining is the hardest of any.

XXIV.

You add new strength to your enemy, when you complain of him; nothing contributes more to his satisfaction, nor renders him more scornful and insolent, than to see that you are not able to endure the mischief he hath done you. You thereby discover your weakness to him, and shew him where you are to be attack'd another time: so that, to speak properly, you your self are the occasion of your own trouble. A man takes a pleasure to see a person he has oblig'd;

oblig'd ; but he ever has either a contempt or aversion for those whom he hath injur'd.

XXV.

IT must needs be good for a man to be lov'd by all sorts of people, but it is dangerous to have any enemy : the truly vertuous are fit for society and conversation. But whereas nothing is of greater rarity than a faithful friend, I advise you be extreamly diligent in the seeking of him. When you have found him, be assur'd your happiness is not small.

XXVI.

THere is nothing so dangerous as a mischievous person who makes it his study to conceal his malice : but to little purpose does he disguise himself; time will pull off the mask which covers him. Expectation hath its turn after reason, and with a little leisure and patience men discover the malice.

malice and artifices, which seem'd to be impenetrable by the most illuminated minds.

XXVII.

WHen you have a design to speak well of your Friends, do it before all the world : but if to reprove them, it should be in private. He who consents to the disorder and transgression of his friend, or is so meanly-spirited as not to divert him from it, becomes himself guilty of the same fault. The Emperour *Domitian*, who seem'd sent into the world only to do all the mischief he could in it, has yet left one very rational saying behind him, and such as is extreamly considerable in the conduct of life : *The silence of good people gives a confidence to evil speakers; and it is an augmentation of their fury, for a man not to trouble himself in checking the course of their malevolence.*

XXVIII.

XXVIII.

WE cannot speak of riches but according to the good or bad use which is made of them. Money is a slave when a man knows how to employ it seasonably ; and it becomes Master of him who over-minds the getting of it, or uses it not as he ought. You make great purchases, when you relieve those that are in necessity. A merciful man gains more by doing good, than those very persons on whom his bounties are bestowed.

XXIX.

IF it happen that one asks any thing of you, be not tedious in answering him. A man is but half-deceiv'd when he has a sudden and peremptory denial.

XXX.

XXX.

A Denyal is a kinde of heart-breaking to such as are despicably poor, and have no way to help themselves ; but there is no evil more hardly supportable than ingratitude.

XXXI.

THere is a great resemblance between a liberal person, and him who sows in the field. The Labourer casts his grain at random ; the winde carries some away and shuffles it as it lists ; the Birds devour some part of it, which is consequently turn'd into ordure : but the other part which chanc'd to fall deep enough into the ground, after it has continu'd there a while, as it were interr'd, will by its appearance glad the Labourer's sight, and return into his Barn with interest.

XXXII.

XXXII.

DO all the good you can while you are in favour with Fortune, and you will find the effects of it in the time of adversity. He to whom you have done any good, when he expected it not, thinks himself doubly oblig'd. All the world is beholding to him who is kinde to the good.

XXXIII.

HE who gives no body any thing is Treasurer to his Heir; who, after the death of that Miser; will conceal the real joy of his Soul, under feigned tears and a personated grief. The avarice of old men is a very ordinary monster in the world; but to speak exactly of the earnestness of rich persons to augment their revenue, methinks it may be said, that that very desire and passion is nothing else, but a kinde of poverty very richly furnish'd.

XXXIV.

XXXIV.

Deny not that to others which happily you will be oblig'd in your turn to ask of them; and if you are wise, ask not that which you have deny'd. Do justice to him who desires it of you, and do those a kindness whom you shall think worthy of it.

XXXV.

Nothing is more easily blotted out than a good turn; it is a loss of it, if a man do but remember it, or repent himself that he had done it. It argues an extream imprudence, for one to regret the good he has done; for by that means he twice loses the thing he has given: It is no longer his, when another hath receiv'd it; and the gift is lost again, when a man thinks too much upon it.

XXXVI.

XXXVI.

IT is ever more advantageous to give, than to receive. When you do good to others, you engage them into your interests, and you seem to assume to your self a supremacy over them; whereas if you receive any thing of them, you become in a manner their Slave. Brag not of having oblig'd your Friend; 'tis an injury to him, if you do but speak of it. Leave it to him to celebrate your generosity; you cannot desire a more remarkable testimony of his gratitude.

XXXVII.

THere is no great difference between an ungrateful person, and him who complains too openly that he was deny'd the favour he hoped for. He is much to blame to call that injustice, which at most amounts but to a defect of liberality; a man who demeans himself so, not distinguishing what

what is due upon the score of justice from that which is granted out of liberality, never thinks himself oblig'd to gratitude.

XXXVIII.

A Man is not oblig'd to give always, when he has given often; nay, it seems he should have the privilege to deny sometimes, especially when he has lost his benefits by obliging ungrateful persons: but it is out of all doubt, that he who is a perpetual receiver, has not upon that score ever the more right to ask.

XXXIX.

Ingratitude is a very common thing amongst men. It seldom happens that the remembrance of a good turn lasts longer than a day. The greatness of a benefit is easily blotted out by the greatness of an injury; and there is so much corruption amongst men, that they think not themselves oblig'd

oblig'd to celebrate any commemoration of the favours they have receiv'd, when they are once offended.

XL.

Suffer not your self to be dazzled with the favour of great persons, and, if you will take my advice, never rely too much on their friendship. A man cannot fly very high with borrow'd wings. Nothing more unconstant than Fortune; she many times casts those down the precipice, whom she had had the pleasure to exalt: but though that should not happen, yet let this be your perswasion, that men have not alwayes the same inclinations.

XLI.

When you are admitted into the shade of some powerful person's prosperity and advancement, work not out your own ruine, by procuring that of others; but remember,

ber, that every day the Sun sets and disappears. It argues simplicity in a man, to think to be the Friend of one single person, only that he may injure and prejudice all others.

XLII.

IF you are in favour with your Prince, employ your credit and interest to oblige as many people as you can, and make not your advantage of his countenance to injure any one. Endeavour so prudently to husband your good fortune, as that all your Friends may be oblig'd to look on it as their own. In fine, give all persons occasion to congratulate your being so highly in favour with him who can do all things.

XLIII.

MAke not an open profession of your being a Favourite, if it be not already known to all people; dissemble it for a time, and content

C

your

your self with a secret satisfaction of your own happiness, till such time as it becomes publick, and be known generally, to both Grandees and those of the meaner sort : and then you may freely own it, and make the less difficulty to solicit on their behalf, who shall desire it of you, even though they are not likely to obtain what they engage you to desire for them. The very inclination you shall assure them of that you have to oblige them, will no doubt abundantly satisfy them ; and if it happen that the affair which you have recommended does not succeed according to their expectation, they cannot complain of any but him, on whom it absolutely depended.

XLIV.

YOU never raise a Structure well when you do it too hastily. What is done with precipitation easily falls, as being not well supported.

Be not so fond as to imagine, that you can raise your self all of a sudden, though you think your self to be highly in favour, for fear of a sudden precipitation into disgrace.

X L V.

L EVEL your pretensions to a mean Fortune, since of all the different conditions of men, this is the most happy and most desirable; a man lives in it with more tranquillity, and is less expos'd to danger than in any of the rest. A high pitch of Fortune is attended with a thousand vexations, and every thing is to be fear'd in that station. Excess of wealth o'rwhelms a man, and brings him into danger every minute. The thunderbolt more commonly reduces the loftiest houses into ashes, than the poor Cottages of Shepherds: and the first fit of sickness ordinarily brings down the strongest and most robust bodies.

XLVI.

OF all the passions, Hope is that which is likely to do us most prejudice; I mean that which relies only on the favour of men. This ordinarily deceives us, and after it has inspir'd those who are cajol'd by it, with some great designs, it precipitates them into a dreadful abyfle of misfortunes.

XLVII.

BE ever distrustful of a fearful and cowardly person, as being the more to be fear'd than others, in regard that wanting audacity and courage, he will be apt to make use of Artifices and treachery. You will finde it less trouble to make your party good against two open Enemies, than against one only, when he disguises and conceals himself.

XLVIII.

XLVIII.

PErfidious and fearful men are ordinarily of weak Intellectuals, extreemly distrustful, credulous in the highest degree, cruel, and sanguinary. Fear, which makes them see danger where there is not any, does withal perswade them, that it should be prevented; and thence it comes that they are in perpetual distrust; and though the ambushes they are afraid of are purely imaginary, yet since it is their absolute perswasion, that they are really so, they look upon most people as their enemies, though most commonly others do not so much as think of them. From this kinde of fear proceeds hatred, and this latter begets that desire of revenge which nothing can check. Nay, sometimes they are hurried on to excesses that are barbarous and full of cruelty, wherein the most innocent are involv'd: no artifice which they will

not make use of, to destroy those whom they think to be their enemies; and they are never secure and undisturb'd, till they have remov'd out of their way whatever is the occasion of their fear. So that it may be said of cowardly and perfidious persons, that they are Prodigal, since they so dearly purchase not valour, but repose and tranquillity.

X L I X.

TO the former reflection this may be added, that there is some ground to dread a person who is himself afraid of falling into extraordinary necessity, inasmuch as avarice ever inspires a man with criminal and barbarous sentiments. Treachery and perfidiousness, clubbing with cowardize, supplies the defect of valour; so that a man who has no generosity is more to be fear'd than he that has much. But from him who knows not what to do, and dreads misery
and

and poverty, a man ought to expect nothing but horrid cruelties, and a procedure absolutely barbarous.

L.

WHen a man hopes for nothing, he fears nothing. It is a difficult matter to divest that man of fear, who indifferently fears all things, who grows pale and trembles upon the least occasion : But when he neglects to fortifie himself against those false alarms, and suffers himself to be o'repress'd with the weight which seems to be fasten'd to that sort of fear, it may be concluded that the evil is past all remedy.

L I.

IF you consider that you are a man, your misfortunes will not seem new to you ; and if you reflect on the disgraces which happen to others, I am confident your own will seem light to you.

C 4 c

LII.

LII.

Take things always by the best handle: many who think themselves unfortunate, are such only so far as they compare themselves with those that are more fortunate. The misfortune which is common, becomes a subject of consolation, or at least alleviates much of the affliction. And experience makes it sufficiently manifest, that an ordinary disgrace ceases to be so; nay does not retain so much as the name, when it is counter-balanc'd with a greater.

LIII.

Is not well done for a man to hunt on another's Lands; but, in my judgment, it is a much greater fault, for any one to seek his diversifement and satisfaction only in those places where he is not himself concern'd. It is requisite the heart should entertain it self with its proper good;

good; nothing is more likely to finde it matter of gladness, than a good disposition of body and minde. A man who is in perfect health, and hungry, is content with the most ordinary refreshments, and finds them very good.

LIV.

Sobriety excites the appetite, and gives meats a better gusto. A criminal pleasure leaves only vexation and bitterness behind it; whereas a satisfaction which is not contrary to vertue, fills the Soul with a certain sweetness, which continues in it a long time. The most intolerable afflictions are alleviated by the testimony of a good conscience.

LV.

AN enemy is always to be fear'd, how despicable soever he seems to be. There's none more ready to do an ill turn, than they who have

not either honour or courage. A man never wants reasons, when he would deny any thing, or is resolv'd to do mischief to others. A danger slighted will not be long ere it returns.

LVI.

THere is much to be gotten in the company of persons of good repute ; but, on the contrary, there's nothing more dangerous than to converse with the debauch'd. The best-grounded vertue is always apt to rotter in their company, at least it suffers an abatement of its esteem, and has much ado to keep its lustre. Good advice contributes exceedingly, and good example is of great force to perswade ; and we see there needs only that to inspire the most meanly-spirited with fervour and generous resolutions. Among good people a man meets with these two advantages : Their example animates us, and the advices we receive from them put all

all our actions into order. The contrary is to be said of the vicious: Their counsels involve such as follow them in great misfortunes, and their example induces the most reserv'd to renounce all modesty. It happens ordinarily, that among wicked men, a vertuous man is in a manner vex'd to be such.

LVII.

Dissimulation buries many injuries, and checks the current of many affronts, which men would hardly avoid without it. 'Tis not to be imagin'd, that he, who does us an affront, out of the malice he hath conceiv'd against us, is the only cause of it; but that we also contribute thereto, when we do not patiently endure it.

LVIII.

THe most innocent and most imperceptible of all revenges, is,
not.

not to make any show of having been offended; in regard the vexation and displeasure which our enemy pretended to give us, when he did us the affront, recoils upon him, and extremely torments him, seeing us not mov'd so much at it as he had imagin'd to himself: So that he is enrag'd to finde himself frustrated of his expectation, and so suffers the punishment of his ill will.

LIX.

A Man should never trouble his thoughts with the events of things, at least not discover any disquiet, when they happen not according to his desires. If any disgrace befall you, discover not your grief thereat, that so you may mortifie your enemy. If on the contrary things succeed well, to your desire, moderate your joy, that you may serve for an example to the ambitious.

LX.

LX.

An Castle is attack'd at that part of it which is weakest. It is imprudence in us, to discover where our minds are most expos'd to assault, and can make least resistance; it will not be long ere the enemy storm us at that very place. Demean your self therefore so, as that it may not be known what you are most sensibly mov'd at.

LXI.

A Man easily becomes Master of another's heart, when he studies his inclinations; and he enters into it, as they say, at the breach, when he makes use of that innocent artifice, to insinuate into his favour. It is not so easie a matter, as 'tis imagin'd, to please people; to compass it well, there must be an intermixture of dexterity and good fortune, especially when a man would not do it by flattery.

LXII.

LXII.

BE slow and considerate in the undertaking of any affair, and expeditious in the execution of it. To put an honourable period to a War in a short time, a man must reflect on many things: there is already a great progress made in a work, when, before it is begun, a man has taken all the leisure requisite to think on it.

LXIII.

HE shews himself an entravagant person, who runs the hazard of losing his reputation, out of an excessive earnestness to preserve it. This ordinarily happens to him, who, to maintain it, uses too many words. For if it be passion that suggests them to him, though he have reason of his side, yet will he exceed his limits, and be chargeable with some excess. So that he will more prejudice himself, by

by the manner of vindicating his reputation, than his enemy could have done, by endeavouring to deprive him of it unjustly.

LXIV.

ENvy corrupts Fortune, as the worm gnaws and spoils timber. Not, to say truth, but that it is always better to be the envy'd, than the envious, since the latter cannot avoid the infamy which is inseparable from that vice; whereas the other finds himself in an honourable hazard, wherein there is glory to be acquir'd.

LXV.

ONe man cannot have a more dreadful enemy than another man; and if envy hath intill'd its venom into the heart of that enemy, there is no antidote strong enough to prevent the effect of it. Jealousie it self causes more disorders, and occasions

sions more enmities, than all the outrages which a man can receive from the most irreconcilable enemies. Envy is never found in that exact measure which we call mediocrity ; it is always extremely pernicious, unless it be when it has vertue for its object ; for then it is most excellent.

LXVI.

THere's but little credit to be given to what a passionate man sayes : he whom we know to be truly dis-interest'd, deserves more to be credited ; but the envious person, not at all.

LXVII.

AN unlawful gain, and such as comes not by direct wayes, occasions more damage, than real losses do, which way soever they happen : a man is sensibly mov'd at these latter but once, but the remembrance of the former will never out of the minde,

minde, but prove a perpetual source of discontents.

LXVIII.

NEver account that a gain which makes an addition to your wealth, but only that which brings you some lustre and repute; have therefore a greater esteem of the augmentation of your good name, than of that of your riches. A man who grows rich at the cost of his honour, loses more than he imagines. A noble reputation is a great inheritance.

LXIX.

THere is no safety in the world; the wicked person fears the rigour of the Laws; the just person has occasion to fear the humorousness and inconstancy of fortune. A man is always more confident, when he hath a long time ruminated upon what he ought to do.

LXX.

LXX.

MEN get sooner and more easily out of the dangers whereto they are expos'd in this world, by wise counsels, than by great strength. 'Tis a greater evil not to know how to live well, than not to be able to live at all. It is much more hard to give a check to Fortune, than to meet her.

LXXI.

KEep your word, and be exact in the performance of all your promises; a man has nothing to lose when he has lost his credit, and passes for a person incapable of any trust. There are some so accusom'd to swear, that men hardly believe them, when they speak most truly. He who takes no pleasure in hearing the truth, will be backward enough to speak it. Flattery is an extreamly-dangerous evil, yet such as will still have its course.

LXXII.

L X X I I.

TO credit all that is said, and not to credit any thing, are two extremities that ought to be avoided; the former is an excess of good nature or complaisance, but there's more safety in the other.

L X X I I I.

IT is manifest, that a man is no great Lover of the truth, when he does what he condemns in others. 'Tis a deceit much of the same stamp, for a man not to do what he says; but it is a self-deceit in him, not to speak as he thinks.

L X X I V.

WHat mischief soever another has done you, yet ought you not ever to sleight or hate him; 'twere madness for a man to be apt to sin, upon the score of the hatred he bears to the sinner. You would be accounted

counted a man void of judgment, if you should be unwilling to preserve your innocence, because another has lost his. You must not chastise one sin by another.

LXXV.

IF you be not absolutely a vertuous person, have at least some kindness for those who are like you; if you have ceas'd to be wicked, be not so ready to condemn those who are yet such, and allow them a little time to take a survey of themselves.

LXXVI.

VW^Hen a man judges with precipitation, it is not long ere he repents of it. As it is in a manner impossible to give a very exact account of a person, whom one had seen only running; so can we not rightly judge of a thing, which we had but very superficially examin'd.

LXXVII.

LXXVII.

Live in peace with all men; be always in hostility against vices, and in perfect harmony with your self. To compass this, you are only to make a consonancy between your words and thoughts, your actions and words, and your desires and actions.

LXXVIII.

Since it is impossible things should always succeed as we would have them, 'tis fit our inclination should comply with the event, whatever it be. A man is eas'd of abundance of cares and distractions, when he can well regulate his desires. 'Tis imprudence for a man over-earnestly to wish for that which he has not within his power, or what is yet at a great distance from him, and to neglect the present, which is within his reach.

LXXIX.

LXXIX.

FOr a man to accommodate himself to the time, is a very noble Science; nay, such as is not unworthy a King. I account you the most unfortunate of all slaves, if you serve by force and against your inclination; whereas if you serve willingly and cheerfully, you nobly set off your servitude.

LXXX.

A Man should stand more in fear of his Conscience than of common report. The happiness of the happiest persons consists in leading a pure and innocent life. The greatest commendation a man can have, is, that he deserves it. It signifies nothing for a man to seem to be what he is not; but it concerns him above all things, really to be such as he ought to be. What advantage will it be to you to receive a thousand
Elogies

Elogies from others, if your own Conscience tells you that you do not deserve them?

LXXXI.

I Extreemly suspect magnificent promises; there is some ground to think, that he who makes them would laugh at others, or that he engages himself to little purpose. Things that are rare and very extraordinary ought rather to be given than promis'd. Do great things, and promise them not.

LXXXII.

A Man doubles his gift, when he gives speedily. The Will is that which is most precious in the presents that are made; and that is yet much more remarkable, when a man makes hast to offer what he is able to do. It is requisite that good offices should surpass injuries, and that acknowledgements should always exceed benefits.

LXXXIII.

L X X X I I I.

TIs a happiness for a man, that he can be reprov'd when he does amiss; the most happy in this world have it not; and *Isocrates* affirms, that it is not to be found in the Courts of Princes. Persons of mean condition have not, as they, so many enjoyments of life, as not minding delights, provided they have wherewithal to live; but they have this advantage, that some are not afraid to admonish them, when they do not what they ought; besides that the Laws are a bridle to them. Princes are depriv'd of that benefit, for they converse familiarly but with very few persons, and those make it their only business to humour them.

L X X X I V.

HE who is appointed to command others, ought to have the meekness of a Father, and not the severity
of

of a Master. No Supremacy but is unpleasant; they who are subject thereto finde it always heavy and insupportable; and therefore it should be made as gentle as may be, and no command issued out, but what is accompany'd with much meekness.

LXXXV.

BE willing to hear all people, and afterwards do what you shall think most convenient. Never commit the execution of your design to him who had been unwilling to approve it. 'Tis a shame to fail twice in the same thing, since we see animals stop at the first, and stand on their guards, that they may not fall a second time.

LXXXVI.

BE always mistrustful of the advice which is consonant to your own desire, and fear the issue of it. You will be thought a person of no great

great judgment, if you prosecute what you have ill begun; and people will have occasion to call you unconstant, if you quit your enterprise.

LXXXVII.

OF all the counsels which may be follow'd, the safest is the best; the readiest, that which is most seasonable; the most pleasing, that which is most easie; the most advantageous, that which comprehends all these. *Asclepiades* had reason to say what the admirable *Celsus* relates of him, commending his reflection; *That the sovereign perfection of a Physician consists in curing his Patient safely, in a short time, and delightfully.*

LXXXVIII.

BE not too much wedded to your own sentiments. If you maintain them with obstinacy, most people, meerly to comply with your humour

humour, and to avoid offending you, will leave you in error, and be cautious of reproving you.

LXXXIX.

THe famous Law-giver *Solon* would not have a man stand Neuter in the division of his Country : and yet when two persons of great Authority have a difference, and are in hostility one against the other, it is not, methinks, too safe for one to declare himself for either party. For those two men coming afterwards to be reconcil'd, as it ordinarily happens, he will be at the greatest loss in the world; in regard the one will be apt to forget the service he had done him, and the other will ever remember the affront which he conceives to have been done him by one who had deserted his interests. Yet is it to be observ'd, that they who take no side in a popular commotion, are like the Bats, who are

peck'd at by the Birds, and bitten by the Mice; Such people being in great danger, as having not dar'd to hazard any thing. Not but that there may be much danger for one to endeavour to disengage himself from danger. The affliction of a just person is an evil accompany'd with happiness. What favour soever men may receive of fortune, yet can they not forbear complaining of her.

X C.

CRUELTY is an ordinary companion of sensuality; and it may be said of him who is immers'd in pleasures, that he is a slave to his passions, that he lives like a beast, and that he hardly has any thing of a man.

X C I.

VV E cannot give a better definition of the modishness and magnificence of apparel, than by calling it, the Supercription of vanity
and

and pride. It is an argument of little judgment, for a man to be very expensive, to gain the reputation of a vain and ambitious person, and to impoverish himself, purposely to get the repute of being rich.

XCII.

Ambition is subject to two great indispositions; it is always extremely odious, and at the end of it is ordinarily very fatal. It is seldom seen that that man prospers, who is so temerarious, as to think to advance himself above his Master.

XCIII.

THings remarkable for their rarity and singularity bring not any profit to those that are possess'd of them; and it is a hard matter to preserve long that which pleases all people.

XCIV.

THe revolutions and destructions of Empires are not so much to be attributed to the multitude of crimes, as to their impunity. We can expect nothing but a dreadful confusion of all things, when it is lawful to do any thing, and Justice it self is sleighted. In fine, the evil is past all remedy, when the Judges and Magistrates, instead of severely punishing the guilty, become themselves complices in their crimes.

XCV.

THere is less danger in being extremely severe, than in being excessively indulgent; and a highly rigorous treatment of men is not so prejudicial to the State, as the countenancing of absolute freedom and licentiousness. If the Judges are remiss and negligent in the punishing of crimes, God will infallibly lift up his hand

hand to chastise both People and Judges together. The just person is extremely injur'd, when the guilty are pardon'd. Nothing approaches nearer the perfection of justice, than severity.

XCVI.

THe strongest protection of a Monarchy, and the best caution the people can have for their security, is, that Prince and People submit to all the Laws, and have a respect for the commands, which God hath establish'd for the observance of them. The slighting of Magistrates, and those who are entrusted with the Government, proves ever fatal to the Republick: when people have lost the respect due to them, they are easily induc'd to make no account of the Laws.

XCVII.

WHen in any Government they only are advanc'd to publick charges who are most rich, and proffer the greatest bribe for them, it cannot subsist long. Those very persons will make no difficulty to embroyl it again for Money. If there be a kinde of Traffick and Commerce in the disposal of charges and honourable employments, persons of merit will for the most part be excluded, and the rich only will be advanc'd thereto; so that to get more wealth, they will learn to commit a thousand unjust actions; and when afterwards they shall grow expert in that dangerous Science, and have the power in their own hands, they will insolently sleight all the obligations of justice.

XCVIII.

XC VIII.

THe vulgar knows not what the mean signifies, but always inclines to one of the two extremities: when they slight a thing, they always degrade it lower than it ought to be; when they commend it, 'tis with an insupportable excess.

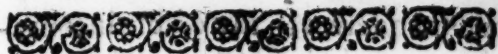
XC IX.

THough there be nothing more unconstant than the affection of the people, yet must it be acknowledged withal, that there is not any thing so powerful; for we always find, that the greater number carries it; and, to tell things as they are, most people take that side. It is a rare thing to meet with a man who is willing to hearken to reason, when in a manner all reject it. Who can oppose the multitude? 'Tis a River overflown, violently carrying along with it whatever resists its current.

§§ Prudential Reflect.

When the popalacy acts without passion, it may be said, that its voice is the voice of God; when it is hurried by passion, 'tis the voice of the Devil. There are but few whom passion does not sometimes force to exceed the limits of reason; but it is yet more extraordinary, to finde a man so regular and circumspect in all his actions, as never to make one step awry.

MORAL



M O R A L

CONSIDERATIONS.

I.

THe design of our Creation was to be happy ; and yet we are so unhappy , as not to know our happiness ; or if we do know it, we do not sufficiently esteem it. How would you have a man take the right way, when he is ignorant of the place whither he is to go ? Felicity is a good that is peculiar to us, and they are deceiv'd who look on it as an accidental one, whereto we have no right. There are some people whose conduct is very irregular ; for having in their own houses whatever is requisite , in order to a contented and happy life in this world, they do not so much as reflect on it, but take great Journeys, and
put.

60 Moral Considerations.

put themselves to incredible inconveniences, to seek for that which they have at home.

PROPOSITION II.

I Would not have men make any difference between that happiness, which is perfect and solid, and Vertue ; and yet if any one will stand so far upon it, as to maintain they are not one, and the same thing, he will not however deny, that the one cannot subsist without the other. He will be forc'd at least to acknowledge, that vertue is as 'twere the instrument of that felicity, which we may enjoy during the course of this mortal life. It cannot be deny'd, but that felicity is a good. Now what greater good is there, than that of being vertuous? If it be just and rational for a man to desire the things which all the world esteems good and advantageous, will it not also be so for him, to use the utmost of his endeavours

deavours to become a good and virtuous man ?

III.

Virtue is of that excellency and value in it self, that it would not have any advantages besides those whereof it is possess'd. It has sufficiently wherewithall to satisfy it self for all the pains and inconveniences it endures : the worthiest and highest recompence of a noble action, is the glory of having done it. Goodness has certain charms so insinuating and so obliging, that the most vicious cannot forbear loving it. And indeed we finde, that in their greatest disorders, they adore its Image, though it has not a line but what is counterfeit ; for if we take their words, they seek after good, and what seems best to them.

IV.

Good hath always this advantage, that, being made for it self, it loses nothing of its goodness. Evil, on the contrary, does not change its nature, though it be done in order to a greater good; and there is no abatement of its malice, even when a man is inclin'd thereto, as to the thing which seems to be best, and most advantageous.

V.

IT is no hard matter to counterfeit virtue; vice ordinarily borrows its name, its attractions, and all its externals. In a word, 'tis not the action, but the intention, which makes the difference between both.

VI.

IT cannot be deny'd, but that Vertue implies much grandeur, since it is vertue, to speak properly, that makes

makes Grandees; and it was rationally said by *Zeno*, that a man who is great and advanc'd in the world, does not immediately upon that account become vertuous, but from the moment of his being vertuous, he is great, according to the true notion of Grandeur. Howe'r it may happen, fortune will ever be forc'd to give place to virtue. A man ceases not to live, when he dies in the defence of virtue.

VII.

VERTUE raises a man much above himself; vice degrades him, and renders him less than man. It is not on'y out of an observance of decorum, that we love Vertue, but there is also a necessity obliging us to do it, if we are desirous to secure to our selves the advantages which Nature hath given us. He who thinks he has reason to stand aloof from that ravishing light, is not only irrational, but

but also degrades himself into a condition below that of beasts.

VIII.

NEver call any thing by the name of Good, but what is able to render men good and vertuous. Though all the world should be earnest to render you the greatest honours, though you were possess'd of all the riches upon earth, though your health were perfect and unalterable; yet can it not be said that you are good, if in very deed you have not vertue. It matters not much that all things be wanting to you, if you have but vertue; and since you cannot be depriv'd of the quality of a vertuous man, that quality, of all those which may be possess'd in this world, is the most noble, the most glorious, and the most excellent.

IX.

THere is nothing but deceitfulness in riches, honours vanish, fortune commonly precipitates those who had been her greatest darlings. Look not therefore on that as a good which may cause so much evil; and cannot render you ever the better man. Vertue injures no man, it is beneficial to all; and though it go alone, yet is it to be preferred before all the rest put together.

X.

THe most sharp-sighted amongst the Philosophers were of opinion, that Good could not be exactly defin'd, otherwise than by affirming it to be a source admirably pure, out of which men draw a Million of advantages. To add somewhat to that conception, we may call it a most precious chanel, which hath vertue for its source, or which brings it down to

to us. Without virtue no man can be happy in this life, and it is virtue also that makes us happy after our death : it is not only beneficial to the soul , but also extreamly advantageous to the body, contributing to our well-being, both in this life and the other.

XI.

Keepe at the greatest distance you can from vice, and imitate not those low-spirited persons, who are so often observ'd to say , *In troth 'tis all I was able to do, my strength would not permit me to go any farther.* 'Twere as good to say, *I can, but I will not acquire vertue* ; when a man, as some ordinarily do , makes this protestation, *I would with all my heart , but it is not in my power to avoid that disorder, nor reform myself of this or that Vice.*

XII.

XII.

THe earth is at as great a distance from the Heavens, as the Heavens are from the earth; there is an equal distance from the one of those extremities to the other, and we cannot observe any inequality but between vertue and vices. True it is, 'tis a much shorter cut to get from vertue to vice, than from vice to vertue.

XIII.

Vertue being the noblest and most advantageous of all qualities, it is but just she should have the most honourable station; and thence it comes, that we finde her always in the middle: 'tis the work of Discretion to assign her her place, and that does so adjust things, that they neither have too much, nor yet want ought requisite for their perfection.

XIV.

XIV.

VIce is always lodg'd near Vertue, and therefore 'tis no wonder, that, many times, men seeking the latter should meet with the former. Stand therefore on your guard, that you be not deceiv'd. It is further to be observ'd, that there are men *in effigie*, and real men; that is, to speak without riddle, there are solid vertues, and others that have only the appearance of such. Vertue disguis'd is a strange Monster. Know, that an action good of it self; done without discretion, and with an evil intention, has only the bark and outside of vertue; but it has indeed all the deformity of vice.

XV.

NOr would I have you content your self with the vertues which are really such, in regard that among those, there are some, called
simple,

simple, others solid. The former, indeed, are extremely weak, and of short continuance; the others are strong, and resist any thing. I acknowledge, a little Lyon is as much a Lyon as a great one, yet there is a great difference between them. A strong and heroick virtue is always attended by several other virtues; a weak virtue is indeed a virtue, but in regard of its weakness, it has not a retinue of other virtues.

XVI.

Make use of reason, as Lyons do of their Claws, Harts of their Feet, and Herons of their Wings; to preserve their lives, and to defend themselves against those who attack them. There is no animal so small and despicable, but Nature hath supply'd it with some Arms for its defence; but endowing man with reason, she hath made a greater account of him, and more sensibly oblig'd

70 Moral Considerations.

oblig'd him, than all the rest of the creatures put together.

XVII.

A Lyon would not live long without his offensives, which are his fore-feet; a Wilde Boar, that should have his Tusks struck or fil'd off, would not be able to defend himself long. So a man who does not act by the dictamen of reason can make no great progress, without falling into some great disorder. *Pythagoras* well observ'd, that prudence was given to man, instead of Fortresses, Walls, and Ramparts.

XVIII.

NO vice more dangerous than that which best represents virtue; yet are not men careful to avoid it, because it is disguis'd. It is a great conjunction of folly and vice, for one man to charge himself with the fault of another, that he may be accounted

accounted innocent of the crime whereof he is guilty. He who countenances a fault, is more guilty than he who commits it; for there may be frailty in the one, but you cannot exempt the other from malice.

XIX.

TO give a just Idea of the reason, wherewith it has pleas'd the Author of Nature to enlighten Mankind, methinks it may be said, that the good use which is made of it gives birth, beauty, and perfection to all the vertues; and, that there are any Vices, proceeds from the abuse of it. Can there be imagin'd a greater abuse of reason, than to make use of it against it self? I know there is nothing but disorder and abundance of confusion amongst the vices; but I know also they agree in this particular, that they are always contrary to reason, and that they combine together to procure his ruine who is

content

content to be a slave thereto. How shameful is it to a man, to employ the directive lights of his minde, only to abase himself to the condition of animals?

XX.

THere is nothing of greater disparagement to a man engag'd in vice, than, like a slave, to obey his passions; and his greatest punishment is, that he cannot execute his designs: for he either wants confidence to undertake what he desires, or if he undertake it, he loses his labour, and meets only with cares and disturbances. And so he is cruelly tortur'd by his own desires; the hope of a pleasure of short continuance gives him a long suffering and Penance. In fine, it is a little sweetness dearly bought, when a man must seek it with much danger in the midst of a River of bitterness.

XXI.

Interest is a constant attendant of all the vices, but profit is not always of the retinue. Vice is not sought for it self, interest only engages men to pursue it. Men are easily inclin'd to be corrupted by pride, because of the honour consequent thereto; by avarice, upon the score of wealth; and by sensuality, upon that of pleasure. There's no vice, but promises somewhat of good, and from which men do not expect some satisfaction: yet are they deceiv'd in that expectation, for the final issue of all is mischief and misfortune.

XXII.

A Man ought to avoid evil, and recede from vice, out of aversion, and not only out of fear. I am content that he be called a fearful person, who eschews evil without
E having

having an extream horreur for it; but I shall never, upon that score, account him just or vertuous. 'Tis an easie thing to say, that there is danger in becoming wicked; it must be added, that a man cannot be so without great injury to himself. Whoever lives ill, makes a real and most considerable loss; and he ought not only to fear the danger wherein he involves himself, but if he hath common sense about him, he should always be in a trembling condition, because his ruine is inevitable if he comply with his passions.

XXIII.

Vices may in some manner take up part of our lives, but they deserve not to employ it wholly. So that to give an exact definition of the lives of persons addicted to Libertinism, it must be said that it is but an imaginary phantasm of life. When a man lives ill, he has nothing but the

the trouble, distraction, and inconveniences of life, but not the true use of it. Idleness is nothing but the loss of a man's life, and his absolute ruine proceeds from the wicked actions whereto he is thereby addicted. There is a great difference between *lasting* and *living*. It may be said of a man who grows old in crimes, that he has *lasted* a long time; but it cannot be said he hath *liv'd* much. We must speak otherwise of a young man full of honour, merits, and vertue, whom death snatches away in the flower of his age; for though he has *lasted* but a short time, yet was his life *long*, since it was a noble one.

XXIV.

IT is of no advantage to a wicked person to have conceal'd his crime; 'tis possible indeed that for a time he may have kept it from the knowledge of others, but what assurance has he that that secret will never be discovered?

76 Moral Considerations.

cover'd? I say further, It is of little importance that men should be ignorant of the Evil we have done, since we are convinc'd of it our selves, and that God knows it; and therefore, if we are at ease on the one side, we ought to tremble on the other. We may indeed sometimes secure our selves against the misfortunes and dangers which threaten us, but we cannot exempt our selves from a thousand frights, nor avoid the enduring of great losses.

XXV.

A Man is in greater danger than he imagines, when he leads an irregular life. A wicked man is ever in disturbance; it signifies nothing to him, that all the world forgives him, since his own Conscience suffers him not to be at rest, and that he alwayes carries his Tormenter about him. The very knowledge of his having liv'd ill, is a dreadful punishment to a vicious person.

XXVI.

XXVI.

BE more careful and tender of your Conscience, than of your Reputation. You are extremely concern'd to have Virtue, and yet it signifies but little, to have it only in the opinion of men. A man ought to make no other account of himself, than according to what he effectually is; and he does not judge aright of himself, who does it by the character which is given him by others, who haply have but a slight knowledge of him.

XXVII.

FROM the pleasures and enjoyments of the Body, proceed the infirmities and indispositions of the Mind. When the Flesh is too much made of, the Soul loses its vigour; but if a man come to make a custom of it, he will not have so much as the force to attempt what at the begin-

78 Moral Considerations.

ning seem'd most easie, and what he seriously desir'd. He who is addicted to delights, cannot have a noble, gallant, and couragious Soul.

XXVIII.

When Pleasure exceeds its limits, it becomes a torture and a punishment. It may well be said, That Virtue implies great advantages, since Vice it self is forc'd to imitate it, to attain its end. Vice studies the personation of Virtue in keeping certain measures, and in receding, at least in appearance, from those extremities which are alwayes accounted an excess and irregularity.

XXIX.

A Lyon loses his fierceness, and becomes tractable, the more he is flatter'd : but the Caresses you make to your Body, render it more insolent and obstinate. Eat not to satisfy your Appetite, but only to satisfy the
Hung er

Moral Considerations. 79

Hunger which torments you. Live not to eat, but eat in order to the preservation of your life. Who eats little, is likely to live long. The excesses of the Palate bring more to their deaths, than the edge of the Sword.

XXX.

Vices cannot cause any thing but disgust; and let men say what they will of it, they can never make any advantage thereof. There's nothing more prejudicial to the Body, than the excessive tenderness and love which men have for it. We find by experience, That Good cheer, and the other enjoyments which flatter the senses, weaken the body, consume the estate, impair health, and condemn the over-eager pursuers thereof to infinite cares, troubles, and inconveniences.

XXXI.

WE may give this definition of Sensuality, That it is a sweet and delightful beginning of a most bitter and fatal end. Vice cannot be invilible to it self; so that being asham'd of its own deformity, it courts darkness, and hides it self as much as may be. And yet hazard, which is inseparable from fortune, is more favourable to it, than the obscurity of the darkest night.

XXXII.

A Man addicted to pleasure, dishonours his body; and the excessive care he takes to humour it, becomes to him a source of afflictions, discontents, and maladies. Who flatters his Body, caresses the flesh, and gives himself over to pleasure; gives confidence to his enemy, and arms him against himself.

XXXIII.

XXXIII.

THe life of an unclean person, is a bestial life : That of a man who onely minds his mouth, may justly be compar'd to the life attributed to Plants, which consists onely in a constant seeking of that nourishment which is proper for them.

XXXIV.

Pride is nothing but a pompous excrescency of Folly : for tell me, I pray, Whether there can be any thing more extravagant, than for one to be desirous to enrich himself with a good that is purely accidental to him ? I think I should not injure a man in calling him a Fool, if he expects to be esteem'd above others, because he is better clad, or has more rarities in his closet. Mens meritis never ought to depend on a good Taylor, or an excellent Goldsmith ; but they are to be judg'd according to the

82 Moral Considerations.

standard of virtue, and gallant actions.

XXXV.

YOU would not excuse him from the imputation of Folly, who, to get himself a heat, should roll up and down in a great heap of Snow. Now a vain and presumptuous person is no less a Fool; for, to compass his end, he makes use of means that put him more and more from it. Because he is highly conceited of his own merit and virtue, he would have all the world of the same persuasion; not considering, That if a man has all the most eminent qualifications, he renders himself contemptible, as soon as he thinks of having the advantage over all others.

XXXVI.

Other Vices covet to be in the dark, and to lie conceal'd; only Pride loves the Noon-light; and it is.

Moral Considerations. 83

is extravagant in this, That it would alwayes appear, as if whatever is in the world were much below it. And yet this, of all the Vices, seems to me the most to be abhorr'd.

XXXVII.

I Do not think any Sottishness equal to that of a vain person, and one that has an overweening opinion of himself; for whatever he thinks and does, is of no advantage to his Body, and withal extreamly prejudicial to his Soul. A man gains nothing in being vain-glorious, but the general hatred and aversion of other men.

XXXVIII.

Whatever we see here below, has a love for what is like it; only the vainglorious person has less aversion for another that is like him, than for death it self. So that as resemblance begets love, so a man who follows the dictates of Pride, opposes Nature

84 Moral Considerations.

Nature it self. Pride is a savage Beast, an Enemy to Society, and pleas'd only in Solitude. This Vice is insupportable in the Rich, and absolutely abominable in the Poor. When Pride fastens it self on a Rich man, it renders him a Fool: when it has the mastery of a Poor man, it deprives him of sense and reason.

XXXIX.

WHat I am going now to say, is somewhat surprizing; but some advantage may be made of it against the disorders and evils which Pride causes. To wit, That this Vice is so detestable, that being counterbalanc'd with the sin, it makes us find a benefit in the very sin it self: And indeed it is sometimes advantageous to an insolent person, to fall into some ugly miscarriage, and such as may in some measure humble him, that so he may disengage himself from that mortal impostume of the mind.

X L.

XL.

A Man should endeavour to become worthy of honourable Employments, but not be over-earnest to seek them: it is more glorious to deserve them, without obtaining them, than to obtain them, without desert. 'Tis a high piece of impudence to put in for an eminent Employment with much forwardness, when a man is convinc'd of his unworthiness to manage it; but to make use of unjust means to attain it, is the greatest infamy in the world. A man who raises himself by base wayes, rather falls, than is advanc'd.

XLI.

God is the Author of all the good that's done in the world, and therefore the evil must proceed from your self only. What occasion then have you to boast so much? Is it of the evil you have done? That should produce

86 Moral Considerations.

produce nothing but shame and infamy. Is it of the good? Consider that as a thing purely accidental to you, and derived from another source. I would rather see you in an irregular course of life, with an inclination to an humble and sincere repentance, than vertuous, with a self-satisfaction attended by Pride.

XLII.

Ambition strays, and misses the way that leads to true honour. Men come not to this by great Employments, nor by the other great Roads, through which Fortune ordinarily directs the Ambitious, but only by following the Tracts of Virtue. And thus it happens, That, with all their fair pretensions, they get further and further from what they desire with so much earnestness. How should a man receive from Vice, that which Virtue only has the disposal of, and which it never grants but to merit?

XLIII.

XLIII.

BE mistrustful of Anger, because it will endeavour to make you approve a wicked resolution, as if it were the best counsel in the world. I say further, while it inclines you to do evil to others, it forces you to do the like to your self. How many persons could we instance in, who were banish'd because they could not dissemble, nor take a word they were offended at?

XLIV.

THere's nothing so opposite to good Counsel, as an angry hasty humour; and therefore a man who is apt to be incens'd, is, methinks, highly oblig'd to consult Prudence, and to ask advice before he speaks. Will you not acknowledge, That a man should have very strong reasons, ere he suffers his judgment to be taken from him? I am seriously of opinion,

88 Moral Considerations.

nion, That it argues as little reason in a man to suffer himself to be hurried away with the impetuous eruptions of Anger, as to be overcome with Drunk.

XLV.

IT is alwayes more safe for a man to pardon his Enemy, than to be reveng'd of him, and it is done with as little difficulty. You may pardon the injury you have receiv'd, without being oblig'd to stir a foot; whereas you must make many a step, and run through a thousand dangers, ere you can satisfie your passion.

XLVI.

VV E must not expect any answer from a Carcase, nor true gratitude from a covetous person. The pleasing passion he has of receiving, makes him forget what he has receiv'd. When he is to receive, the greatest things seem very small to him:

him: but when he is oblig'd to give, the least things seem very considerable and precious to him.

XLVII.

OPen not your Soul to Avarice, unless you resolve to lead a vexatious and miserable life, when others rejoyce. If you hearken to that cursed passion, it will make you endure all the inconveniencies of Poverty in the midst of your gold and silver, and you will not so much live as languish. The condition of a covetous person is so unhappy, that the greatest mischief you can wish him, is, that he should live long.

XLVIII.

THere are many things wanting to rich persons, but it may be said, That a covetous man wants all things; nay, he is so unfortunate, that he wants as well what he has, as what he has not, and possibly more:
for

for he receives not the least satisfaction from what he is possess'd of, whereas he may find some sweetness in desiring what he has not yet. He gathers not the fruit of the goods whereof he is Master, and he has, at most, but the sight and scent of the flowers he wishes.

XLIX.

THere's a vast difference between a person who is afraid of poverty, and him who over-passionately is desirous of wealth: Men would not willingly see the former, but the other they avoid as much as they can, and have a dreadful aversion for him. Necessity makes the former bold, and conceive direful designs; but Avarice, which is a base and infamous passion, renders the latter despicable to all sorts of persons, because he obliges none but his Heirs, and that contrary to his intention.

L.

TH E extraordinary Affection which a covetous man has for the goods of this world, is as prejudicial to him as a conflagration or shipwrack. For he has no benefit of what he is possess'd of, and it would be the same thing to him, if his treasures had been consum'd by fire, or buried in the Sea. Is not the Gold which stuffs his Coffers as good as absolutely lost to him? Methinks it may be said in a word of a covetous person possess'd of great Treasures, That it is a well-furnish'd kind of Poverty.

L.I.

A Covetous man is not beneficial to any one; he does much hurt to himself, he gives nothing to others, and yet deprives himself of all he could do, making himself the most unhappy of all men. In fine, he is reduc'd

92 Moral Considerations.

reduc'd to that extremity, as that he cannot do any good, but by ceasing to live, and then his Heirs laugh at him in their mourning, and disguise a real joy under a personated sadness:

LII.

A Covetous man never wants a reason to deny, whereas the truly-liberal person ever has one to give, even when there is nothing desired of him. The former has no enjoyment of the riches whereof he is possess'd; the other makes use of them, even when he despoils himself to gratifie his friends. One is a slave to what he is possess'd of, but the other, by a surprizing effect of liberality, is still Master of the good he hath given away.

LIII.

A Man must either have the command of his money, or the money must be his Master; there is no mean

Moral Considerations. 93

mean between these two Extremities. Riches abuse him who knows not how to make use of them as he ought.

LIV.

ENvy hath this ill quality, That it rejoyces at the evil and ruine of others, without the least advantage to it self : so that it is not so much a passion, as a distraction, when, as it commonly happens, it derives its own trouble and punishment, from the joy and content of others. How unhappy are they over whom this shameful passion is predominant ! And how are they to be bemoan'd, since not only real Evils, but also whatever they discover that is good and advantageous in others, becomes their torment ? The Evils of this life are but too many to make a man unhappy ; but Envy is a double affliction, since the happiness of others contributes to its torment.

LV.

L V.

WE might fitly compare Envy to that kind of stone where-with men whet Knives : so Envy is good only to give an edge to the Tongue, yet is it of some advantage for one to be blam'd and reprov'd by an evil speaker ; and we commonly find that they who are wholly inclin'd to be Detractors, cannot forbear speaking against the most just and vertuous.

L V I.

IS better to be the mark of Envy, than the object of Flattery. The condition of an envious person, is a thousand times worse than that of a man visited with the Plague. Nay, some stick not to affirm, That it is better being possess'd with the Devil, than with Envy. We find indeed that Envy is ill qualifi'd, which way soever we consider it ; the malice

malice attending it is most abominable, and the punishment consequent thereto, is yet more strange than is imagin'd.

LVII.

VE must say further, That Envy is a strange Monster; for being injustice it self, as all know, yet is it however just in some manner. This requires explication. There's nothing so unjust as Envy, because he who is infected therewith, thinks himself hurt by the virtue of others. But on the other side, there's nothing more just than Envy, because it chastises him who bearkens to it, and follows it, condemning him to such dreadful torments as surpass all imagination.

LVIII.

THere's hardly any difference between a Flatterer who humours People, and a Wolf searching after a sheep.

96 Moral Considerations.

sheep. He has not any love for the sheep, and his looking after it, is only to make a prey of it. Be therefore mistrustful of a Flatterer, as of the most cruel of all your Enemies. The covetous person knows him better than any one. 'Tis too slight a character, to say, That Flattery is a refin'd kind of Lying; but it must be added, That it is an infamous piece of Treachery; for the wickedst person in the world thinks it not much to speak advantageously of others, and to oblige them beyond his ability, when himself is therein concern'd: he has at that time all appearances of a real Friend, and he sometimes makes sufficient discoveries thereof; and yet he does all the mischief that an Enemy is capable of doing.

LIX.

TIs a common Proverb, That a Lye has no feet; but I think it might be said also, That a Lye has wings,

wings, and that the Lyar has no feet. We find that Lying Travels post, and spreads it self into several places of a sudden ; whereas a Lyar is as easily overtaken, as one who would run away having a Leg broken.

L X.

A Man is never more Eloquent, than when he is in Necessity ; and if ever he be likely to make use of far-fetch'd and extraordinary sentences, it must be when he finds himself obliged to represent his Exigencies. Truth is stronger than all Reasons, and 'tis she, to speak properly, that keeps up the vigour of the mind. And yet men are commonly so indispos'd, that they cannot digest, nay, hardly taste the truth, if it be not a little disguiz'd.

L X I.

Love cannot be legitimate or rational, unless it hath good for its object. We do amiss therefore in loving what is contrary to us, and what is not in a capacity to hurt us, but only when we place our affection on it. Must it not be a misfortune in Love, for one to love the cause of his misfortune? To this rank are they reduced, who love Fortune, and slight virtue.

L X I I.

THe serenity which the soul sometimes is in, and the joy it feels, is the fruit, or, if you please, the just recompence of her love. A man is not only happy when he directs his affections towards good, but he also participates of the qualities of the thing beloved, and becomes truly good. The highest point of virtue consists in loving God, and, let im-
pious

Moral Considerations. 99

pious and licentious persons say what they please of it, there is no felicity equal to that of being loved by God.

LXIII.

IS it not a great extravagance, to be passionately desirous of goods, which being sought by other persons, will cause you a thousand disquiets? Nor is it a less, to have an affection for persons who cannot be lov'd by others, without giving us much jealousy, and a great disturbance of mind. God only has this advantage above all the Creatures, that we may love and rely on him, without any fear of his being taken away from us. 'Tis an enormous Crime for one so much as to doubt the constancy of his friendship, for it is not likely he will ever forget us, or forsake us first.

L X I V.

WHo loves a thing which he deserves to lose, because he loves it, loves like a Fool, and an inconsiderate person. Now whoever loves Riches, deserves to lose them. Wish that you be accounted wise and prudent in love, and love only that which you will make your self worthy to possess, in loving it as you ought. Do you not know that love is the Bird-call of love, and that to be belov'd, is a very delicious bait, and an allurement that can hardly be rejected? Now friendship proceeds from both.

L X V.

VE are not to fear any thing but evil; since therefore all the evils of this life have only the appearance of being such, there is no occasion to fear them. The least fault ought to make us tremble, but we should

Moral Considerations. 101

should not be startled at labour. Sin is a real evil ; labour is not an evil, as it is commonly imagined : nay, it is a real good, but not much in request among effeminate and sensual persons : so that though opinion be not favourable to it, it fails not however of having truth of its side.

LXV.I.

Remember, that in the very things you eagerly pursue, there is more to be feared, than to be desired. For example, when you have a strong inclination to some pleasure, how are you not more afraid of the gall intermixt in it, and the discontent which is inseparable from it? You will possibly resent it through the whole course of your life, whereas the satisfaction you have lasts not a quarter of an hour.

LXVII.

Fear and sadness are not miscall'd
 the blood of the wounded Soul.
 A man does not stand still to look on
 the blood trickling from a wound,
 but bethinks himself of some sudden
 remedy, and if possible, of binding it
 up. When you are threatned with
 some unwelcome accident, lose not
 time in examining how heavy the
 blow will be, but rather think of the
 means to avoid it, or prepare your self
 to receive it.

LXVIII.

Your disgraces and miseries will
 never seem so great to you,
 when you compare them with those
 of others. The most afflicted per-
 sons are easily comforted, when they
 reflect on what others endure; and
 it is an alleviation of the inconveni-
 encies of this life, that we have fel-
 low-sufferers, and no man can say, he
 endures alone.

LXIX.

L X I X.

SHAME and FEAR are careful and faithful enough in the preservation of the goods of this life. Shame hath great power over the spirit of a person of quality, and commonly hinders him from doing any thing amiss. The Populace is mindful of its duty through fear. The former motive argues a noble Soul, and generous Heart. The other betrays a mean spirit; and thence we find, that it exercises its power, for the most part, over those who are born to servitude.

L X X.

FEAR is nothing but a kind of prudent counsel, and a secret advertisement, which Nature gives all men, that they may secure themselves against the evils which may attack and surprize them. Those therefore which cannot be avoided, are not to

104 Moral Considerations.

be feared, since it is impossible to prevent them. Fear is good against danger, but signifies nothing in Diseases, no more than it does in the losses which men may have : but when they are certain of their coming, they must not then be discouraged, nor fear them with a certain weakness ; but they should rather expect them with an immoveable stedfastness of mind, and endure them with a truly-heroick constancy.

LXXI.

THe apprehension of evil, causes many times more grief, and a hundred times more disquiet than the evil it self when it comes. What unhappy accident soever happens, a man is smitten with it but once ; and the blow being over, a man is free : whereas he who lives in continual fear, is subject to receive many. It therefore argues want of reason, to be alwayes in fear of an evil, which cannot last alwayes.

LXXII.

Moral Considerations. 104

LXXII.

A Man that fears, is not capable of undertaking many things; he readily believes whatever is said to him. Fear checks the noblest projects in the World; and while a man hearkens to it, he never executes the resolutions he had taken. In fine, it makes such a mutiny in mens imaginations, that they take the slightest suspicions for manifest truths.

LXXIII.

A Man must not compute the greatness of the danger by the fear he may have of it. It is sometimes dangerous to have much confidence. If you are desirous to live in tranquillity, fear moderately, and follow not the opinion of some, who imagine to themselves, that to be happy upon earth, a man should not be troubled at any thing.

L X X I V.

T Here is less prudence in hoping during the course of this life, than in fearing with wisdom. Of evils there is a greater number and certainty than of goods. Diseases, losses, disgraces, and afflictions, are so frequent, that a man hardly hears any thing else spoken of, and it is rare to meet a man exempt from them. For one rich person, how many poor are there? The number of the happy is very small, whereas that of the miserable is almost infinite.

L X X V.

T Rue it is, Fear interprets things ill enough, yet has it this advantage, that it never lies. It may be further said, by way of excuse, that it is a very difficult matter to avoid fearing, when a man finds himself in danger. A man is more likely to be deceiv'd, when he hopes, in regard
the.

the goods of this life are not so ordinary, and that there are abundance of people perpetually in quest of them.

LXXVI.

NOt to have any hope, is to be the poorest of all Mankind. For he who has nothing to hope, is reduc'd to the utmost of all necessities. How would you have a man to be in a capacity of having some good, when he has lost hope, which is the last of all goods?

LXXVII.

Past enjoyments do not alleviate present evils; whereas the evils a man has endur'd, heighten the present satisfactions. An expected good is not truly a good; evil endur'd with patience is no longer evil, and as soon as it ceases, 'tis chang'd into pleasure, and gives the constant bearer of it much satisfaction.

LXXVIII.

LXXVIII.

You will never be deceived, when you shall regulate your joy and grief according to the things themselves. Use them so, as not to be excessively afflicted at what amounts to almost nothing; nor to be overglad, when there is but small occasion for it. Prudence would have certain measures observed in the liberty granted to our passions, and we must not, upon the least occasions that present themselves, suffer them to act to the full extent they may have. Take a little leisure to consider what frightens you; perhaps you will not fear it at all, when you shall have reflected on it; at least the apprehension you have of it will not be so great. Why, I pray, are you so cast down, and what is it that so much afflicts you? Have the patience to examine it, and you will certainly find, that there is some excess of your side, and that the
the

the occasion is so trivial, that it deserves not you should conceive any grief thereat. Your fear is not rational, since all the sufferings of this life, and what must have its period with time, ought not to disturb a man, who makes it his glory to be guided by the dictates of reason.

LXXIX.

TIs not the greatest misery of man, as some imagine, to have death for his enemy, and to be continually struggling with it during this life; but it consists in this, That his coming into this world, is only in order to destroy himself. He is his own most cruel enemy, and having ordinarily too great an affection for life, he becomes a slave to all Vices; whereas if he had a strong apprehension of death, he would not be so backward, in endeavouring to become a virtuous man, and consequently very happy.

LXXX.

LXXX.

V V Hoever would free himself from the apprehension of evil, has no more to do, than to apply himself to the doing of that which is good, and that continually. Eschew evil, that you may have a right to hope for good. A man benefits himself when he obliges others. You do more injury than you imagine, when you mind only your own concerns and interest: if you demean your self so, none will be ready to assist you in a time of necessity. It's no great commendation to forbear doing evil to any one; in serving others, a man does not only pleasure them, but he also obliges himself. Make as many Friends as possibly you can. *Attalus* said, It was a greater pleasure to make Friends, than to have such; and I add, That it is many times more advantageous.

LXXXI.

THe goodness, or integrity of the Soul, which we know under the precious and amiable name of Innocence, implies the not committing of any fault; and Justice has for its mark, the not injuring of any body. Yet, to say truth, is not this but one part of Charity; to make it complete, we must add mercifulness thereto. And indeed the lustre of this virtue, which does not permit the offending of any one, is admirably heightned by the noble effusions of liberality.

LXXXII.

THe love of your self ought to be the standard and module of your justice; by judging others by your self, you cannot be deceived, in regard you consider their persons, goods, affairs, and concerns, as if all were your own. 'Tis a kind of injustice, for one to imagine, that he has
highly

highly oblig'd a person, when he hath done him no harm. Justice does not require any acknowledgment; and I should do ill to brag that I had done a man a kindness, meerly because I had forbore to offend him.

LXXXIII.

TO suspect evil sometimes, and to be mistrustful of it, may pass for a piece of wisdom; but to believe it without any ground, argues lightness. There is prudence in the suspension of a mans judgment, and justice, in keeping it secret. Be wary in framing your judgment alwayes according to the testimony of the senses; they may easily be surprized, but you should be careful not to be deceived. Never therefore declare your thoughts hastily upon any matter whatsoever; time will instruct you, and discover the truth to you, that you may afterwards do the like to others.

LXXXIV.

LXXXIV.

Justice without Clemency, comes near Cruelty; and Clemency without Justice, is a very dangerous imprudence. True it is, we should always assign the first rank to Justice; but Lenity, Meekness and Clemency ought to attend it; nay, we ought to give them a greater extent. Justice is a quality so noble and precious, that it ought to be commended even when it is not supported by prudence; whereas prudence, without the assistance of justice, has neither merit, nor lustre. Justice has this advantage, that being alone, it is still very advantageous; but prudence can only hurt, when it is not supported by justice. There is no venom more dangerous than that of Serpents; so we receive greatest harm from those whose arms consist most in subtleties and insinuations.

LXXXV.

LXXXV.

WHen a man pursues only what can give him satisfaction, 'tis a difficult matter for him to meet with what is good and beneficial. If the will have the supremacy over reason, it will make him conceive strange designs. 'Tis not possible for him to be just, while he is govern'd by some affection. Consider not the persons, look only on the merit; think it enough to examine who has the right of his side, without reflecting on your own power, or complying with your own particular inclination.

LXXXVI.

TIs an additional degree to ones malice, for him to do evil, only because he loves it; but it is a very great progress in wickedness, to love the evil, because he has done it. It is only the part of a Fool to become wicked, that he may do harm to those
that

that are such; and it argues a clear loss of judgment, for a man to renounce virtue, because he has an aversion for those who love Vice.

LXXXVII.

A Man must have a great stock of courage and resolution, to overcome shame; but he comes to the highest pitch of generosity, who suffers not himself to be brought down by necessity. Whoever has the courage to make head against that, acquires no less glory than he who overcomes himself.

LXXXVIII.

TRue generosity does not consist in the undertaking of many bold and difficult things, but in constantly enduring all the evils that happen. There's no power so absolute upon earth, but sometimes meets with resistance; but patience continues always firm and immoveable, and

and nothing can be done against it. To say that one will not support some disastrous accident, or some injury, is to speak like Women; and to make too visible a discovery of weakness. A man speaks otherwise, and sayes with a generous resolution, I will not do it.

LXXXIX.

Great difficulties do only animate such as have courage; the misfortunes that happen to them, discover what they are. They know not what it is to hearken to Fear, being perswaded that a generous and magnanimous Soul can triumph over all its enemies. It must be confess'd, that patience is wonderfully strong, since it compasses all without being assisted by any one. 'Tis a fortress that defends it self, and stands not in any need of anger, to force off such as attack it.

X C.

Fortitude and Prudence are the two virtues that support the magnificent Chariot wherein Victory is seated. A man is doubly fortifi'd, when he knows how to make a conjunction of generosity and good counsel. How gallant and daring soever a man may be, yet cannot he be successful long in his enterprizes, if he be not reliev'd by prudence.

X C I.

Mediocrity must infallibly be admitted into the rank of the virtues, because it keeps constantly in the middle. The other virtues, to be true ones, must, with much care and pains, seek for that which mediocrity has naturally. Its name sufficiently discovers, That it is a virtue which alwayes takes up the middle or mean, which all the other virtues endeavour to get into. There's nothing more

118 Moral Considerations.

more true than what I am going to say, though it be somewhat surprising: What is call'd the least in the moral virtues, is what's most great and most excellent therein; the excess justly passes for a defect, and mediocrity is acknowledged a rare virtue. Moderation seasons all things; without it the sweetest and most pleasant become bitter and insupportable: It keeps up honour, it offers pleasures and enjoyments that are pure and innocent. In a word, we are to look on it as the source and principle of whatever there is that is good, of good repute, and beneficial amongst men.

XCII.

A Moderate man has alwayes a sufficient Estate. And as the passions ruine us by the excessive expences we are obliged to be at to satishe them; so our recession from Vices contributes not a little to enrich

Moral Considerations. 119

rich us. A man acquires much, when he is at no superfluous expence. Moderation therefore is not only a virtue, but a great treasure also. Dice and Women consume more wealth than a great Conflagration; and of all the engagements a man may have in the world, I think there's none stronger, and more hard to get out of, than Gaming and Debauchery.

XCIII.

A Man should not for any other reason care much for his body, than that he cannot live without it; since therefore you do not live for it, trouble not your self so much to satisfy it. Regulate its accommodations according to its exigencies, and not according to the satisfactions it craves. Men would not be subject to so many diseases, if they treated their bodies with less tenderness than they do.

XCIV.

XCIV.

DEath is an excellent Picture, which faithfully represents virtue. Let him who would learn to live well, consult the dead. True Philosophy is nothing but a serious reflection upon death: let us make use of its precepts, that we may discover the deformity of Vice, and the vanity of all things in the world; let us also follow the Rules it gives us, to make a great progress, in a short time, in the study and exercises of virtue.

XCV.

YOU will never better remember your self, than when you shall think that some day you must dye. The consideration of death is admirably fruitful: for it teaches us what we are now, it shews us what we shall be one day, and it instructs us what we ought to do during the course of this life. In fine, death is the most exact
rule

Moral Considerations, 121

rule of mens lives, and it does them more good than they imagine to themselves.

XCVI.

IMagine not that at your death you simply cease to live; I say, that it is then you cease to dye. True it is, you began to live the first day you came into the world; but from that day also you began to dye; you made but one entrance into both life and death: the light which enlightens your life, is like that of a Candle; what keeps it in, consumes it.

XCVII.

PRay, tell me, what was man before he was born? You will grant, he was not. Now I hold that to be the greatest and most insupportable of all necessities. And what is he who a little before was not, and who after he hath received being, is in a manner nothing, and who with-

G

in

122 Moral Considerations.

in a short time will be but a little heap of dust and ashes? It must be acknowledged, That all these things considered in themselves, are extremely despicable; only virtue comprehends so much greatness and excellence, that it is able to exalt and ennoble whatever approaches it. Let us therefore esteem that above all things, which only can render us so considerable.

XCVIII.

THere is no difference between living long, and suffering long. Afflictions, troubles, tears and griefs are born with us. The life of man is but a long and tedious series of dangers, evils, and torments; but man has some reason to comfort himself, since that when he begins to live, he immediately begins to approach his end, and to make some advancement towards death.

XCIX.

Virtue receives no less lustre from the misfortunes which befall the followers of Vice, and the punishment which the wicked commonly suffer, than from the solid enjoyments and satisfactions which good men many times feel, in the exercise of the most difficult virtues. He must needs be the most miserable person in the world, who has a Soul that serves only to keep his body alive, and does not regulate its motions. It may well be said, this being acknowledged, That the Soul is to the body, but as salt to meat, which it exempts from corruption only for a time.

C.

Virtue is but an accident to man, to speak as the Philosophers do; yet does that accident preserve his substance. All things were created by God for the service of man, and he

124 Moral Considerations.

created man, that he might receive honour and service from him, as well as from all the rest of the Creatures. 'Tis virtue that renders us capable of serving and honouring him, who hath vouchsafed to bring us out of nothing, and without it we cannot please our Creator.

STOICAL



STOICAL MAXIMES.

I.

IT is not what's possessed that gives satisfaction, but what one loves. In like manner, the discontent of most men proceeds not from what is wanting to them, but from what they desire. He who desires nothing, may be as happy as he who has all the accommodations in the world. To be free from all desires, is a treasure to be preferred before an Empire. How many things are there which may be wanting to the greatest Kings upon earth? whereas a man who desires not any thing, can never be said to be indigent.

II.

JOy is not within the jurisdiction of Fortune, she cannot, when she pleases, make us a present of it: 'tis a moveable belonging to the heart, not only because it cannot be met withal elsewhere, but also because there only it has its birth. They are not the things which please us that create our pleasure and satisfaction; nor are those which disturb us, the cause of our disquiet; we must only call our own will to an account, that being the right source from which joy, pleasure, vexation and sadness proceed. Thence it comes, that what is pleasing to one, is extremely unpleasant to another. 'Tis not to be attributed to the variety of things, but to the diversity of our wills, that our hearts entertain so many affections opposite one to the other.

III.

III.

TIs an error common to all men; that they would attain felicity by following wayes which cannot lead them thereto. How can they arrive at the point of not desiring any thing, while they take the way of desires? Would you spare your self abundance of trouble and pains-taking? Regulate your concupiscence, have no violent inclination for any thing whatsoever. When a man desires nothing beforehand, he is in no fear of being unhappy, and he comes to the end of his Journey, without being at any pains by the way. The true felicity of a man upon earth, consists rather in the not-possession of any thing, than in being numbred among the living. Let us once in good earnest renounce all our desires, since it is a thing within our power.

IV.

THe way for a man to free himself from many troubles, cares, and vexations, is, not to fear, or desire any thing. All your unhappiness, if you reflect on it, proceeds only from your not having what you wish, or haply from the hapning of something to you which is not consonant to your inclination. You will have no disgraces to overcome, while your heart preserves its freedom, and all things are indifferent to it.

V.

THe more the affection is smother'd in us, the more the discontent abates. A man is never further from falling into affliction, than when he feels his will at liberty, and not bent by any strong inclination. To make an exchange of inclination, is the most easie and most certain way to get out of misery. Adjust
your

your desires to all sorts of emergencies, and you will surmount the greatest difficulties without any trouble. Vexation is rather taken than given.

V I.

TIs a great art to know how to desire; unless a man be very well vers'd in it, he cannot live contentedly. He who can moderate his desires, is above all, and the whole world has not any thing worthy of him. It is an easie matter for one to find perfect repose here below, and to keep at a distance from him the unfortunate accidents which render life burthenfom and insupportable: all that's to be done, is, to have an absolute independency to all creatures, and to be raised above ones self. There are some, who, having lost their sight, and the use of hands and feet, yet live in much content. Make not therefore your happiness to depend either on the body, or on any thing

130 Stoical Maximes.

that can flatter the senses. A Cripple does not so much as think of repining at his lameness, when his heart is satisfied. He that can best be without himself, cares but little for all the rest. You may be extreamly rich with the good use of your will.

VII.

TIs a great imprudence to love without choice and discernment; a man should be careful where he places his affection. If he desire confusedly, and in the gross, he cannot avoid being deceived; and the ill success which our desires have had, fills us with sadness and affliction, out of which we can hardly recover ourselves. If you desire what is within another mans power, you run the hazard of getting nothing thereby but displeasure; whereas if you wish only what depends on your self, you will run no hazard of your satisfaction. Endeavour that your will have not
any

any bent but for those things which are within its jurisdiction. And what is there that more absolutely depends on it, than the desire of being a good man, and of employing it self only in vertuous and praise-worthy actions?

VIII.

Pleasure consists in the accomplishment of the desire; and therefore you ought so to regulate your will, as that it should wish only those things which it can compass, without giving her desires the freedom to reach at those things which are impossible. You will be the happiest of all men, if you measure your inclinations, affections and desires, according to the power you have: if you recede from this rule, you will be miserable as often as you shall desire any thing.

I X.

IF you can satisfie your appetite with a little meat, you will be thought extravagant, if you desire to eat much, to augment hunger, and irritate your appetite. The case will be the same with you, when, though you can be satisfied in desiring but few things, yet you inconsiderately slacken the reins of your will, which minds not content, because she is hurried away with a monstrous excess to desire whatever is contrary to her own repose. That of concupiscence, is a sphere of a prodigious extent. Our hearts sooner find tranquillity and content in not desiring any thing, than in making great Acquests.

X.

HE who is come to the point of not-fearing any thing, and of not-hoping any thing, has made a most considerable Acquest: the peace and serenity he enjoyes, is a Present, which Fortune, as rich as she is, is not able to make him; a man by this means may become his own Benefactor. He may procure to himself more satisfaction, in not desiring any thing, than he should receive from the conquest of the whole world. 'Tis well known, there have been some generous persons who have looked on the world with contempt; but all the people upon earth passionately wish themselves as happy, as he who has given over desiring any thing in this world. That is the solid content, and true felicity of our hearts.

X I.

IF your courage be so great, as that you are resolved to suffer, be assured, you will deliver your self from a heavy burthen of cares, since you will shake off impatience, which cannot be better defined, than by saying, that it is as 'twere the thread which fastens all evils together; or rather as the point, which opens a passage to disgraces and misfortunes in our Souls. Impatience does not diminish, but alwayes augment the evil.

X II.

ADd not a second evil to that which you already endure, by suffering your self to be overcome with impatience. Whoever does not support his misfortune with patience, besides the fault he commits, is further obliged to wade through a second trouble, much greater and more burthenfom than the former.

X III.

XIII.

MEn are exempted from rage and despair, when they patiently suffer the evils that happen; but they feel a most undisturbed joy, when they apply themselves to do well. There is no satisfaction equal to that which proceeds from a good action.

XIV.

Keepe your heart free and disengaged from passions, and you will be greater than *Alexander*; you will not be enslaved to any one, whereas that Monarch was so to his passions. I would rather be reduced to the condition of the most wretched Captive, than that any passion should domineer over me.

XV.

XV.

I Make no difficulty to prefer the freedom of the heart before the Empire of the whole world. A man is not yet free, while he is struggling with his passions, and is engaged against his own inclinations. He who obeys his passions, is at the same time a slave to several Tyrants.

XVI.

I T is no small victory to conquer a passion. 'Tis more glorious for a man to triumph over his own heart, than to take a Cittadel by storm; provided he be obliged for that Conquest only to Virtue, and not to Chance, and the impetuosity of some other passion. For there are some Vices that are mutually-destructive one to another: so that to employ one Vice to chase away another, is not so much a victory, as a shameful defeat.

XVII.

XVII.

WHen two Vices are contesting in our Souls, and one has the victory over the other, it cannot be said that it is forced thence, but only kept in restraint, so as that upon the first occasion it flies out again, and becomes more insolent than before.

XVIII.

TO lop off the branches of a Tree, and to leave the stock in a thriving condition, is to take much pains to no purpose. Virtue is ill grafted in a heart, where the root of Vice thrives. One passion does not destroy another passion; one Vice does not smother another Vice.

XIX.

THere are some forlorn and debauched persons, who have a horreur for certain Vices, not out of any pleasure or satisfaction they find in Virtue, but by reason of the inclination they have to some other Vices. 'Tis a strange unhappiness, to conceive a strong disgust to evil, without loving the good.

XX.

THere is nothing more strange, yet more true, than what I am going to say, to wit, That the Vices which most resemble Virtue, are those which a man ought most carefully to avoid, for they are a thousand times more dangerous than the rest. An enemy that disguises himself under the vail of sincere Friendship, is much more to be feared, than he who declares open hostility. We shall doubtless fall into the traps of counterfeit

terfeit Virtues, unless we cleanse our Souls of all sorts of affections, passions, and desires.

XXI.

THe Master-piece of life consists in knowing that which is good, and how to love it. Cares, troubles, and afflictions enter into the Soul at those two gaps, and all our misfortune proceeds either from our not judging rightly of things, or not well regulating our affections. Passion makes us eagerly desire that which is evil, and ignorance hinders our distinguishing between good and evil.

XXII.

Let us be alwayes guided by truth, never by opinion. Apprehension and deceit commonly make evils appear greater than they really are; and were it not for those two, men would not think any thing overburthenfom in the world.

XXIII.

XXIII.

WE many times rejoyce at what we should bewail, and sometimes bewail what we should laugh at. One while we seem to be sad, another while glad, though we have no occasion to express either grief or joy. We should rather blush at our weakness, considering that such trivial things make so much impression on our Souls.

XXIV.

Apparent evils do commonly torment us more cruelly than the real; and it may be said, That what causes sadness, affliction, and discontent, is not so much the evil that happens, as that which we imagine must happen. Opinion deceives and poysons us.

XXV.

WE account Wealth a good, and in that we do not judge rightly of it; that name is to be appropriated only to the good use which is made thereof, when we make a prudent dispensation of what is in it self the occasion of much evil.

XXVI.

IF there be any good in Riches, 'tis very inconsiderable; for they give us a great bent to evil, involving those that are possessed thereof in a thousand dreadful dangers, and condemning them to many cares, troubles, and disturbances: they are the fuel of Concupiscence, and of all the Vices; they cause disquiet to those that desire them; they also who are possessed of them, are in perpetual fear of their getting away from them: in fine, they who have lost them, are hardly recoverable out of their affliction.

XXVII.

XXVII.

POverty is the greatest of all goods, because it does not hurt any but him that avoids it, and has an aversion for it; whereas Riches most dangerously hurt those who over-passionately love them. If any one say, That Poverty is extremely incommodious, we must answer him, that the incommodioufness is not annex'd to Poverty, but to the person of him who is poor.

XXVIII.

TIs a very gross errour to imagine, that a man is very happy, because possessed of great treasures; and that men should make a greater account of him, than of such as are poor. I affirm, on the contrary, that he is more miserable, than such as are not possessed of any thing at all; for the greater his Riches are, the greater are his Exigencies. What is wanting
to

to a poor man? Nothing in a manner; he is content when he has food and rayment, whereas there are a thousand things wanting to a rich man, to feed his Luxury, Pride, and Vanity.

XXIX.

Rich men are reduced to great necessity, since whatever they desire is wanting to them; whereas the poor man wants only what is necessary. A rich man has so many exigencies as he hath passions and vices to feed. A poor man minds only his sustenance. I call a man poor, be he as rich as may be otherwise, when he has need of all he is possessed of. I call a man rich, how miserable soever he may appear, when he stands not in need of all those things that are out of his power. Many are poor with all their treasures, because they know not how to be content with little.

XXX.

They who desire riches only in order to voluptuousness, are meanly-spirited, and infamous; they who hope to acquire honour thereby, are extreamly deceived. In fine, they who seek them, only in order to the satisfaction of their passions, are guilty of a great fault; but they who propose to themselves no other design in the acquest thereof, than to exempt themselves from necessity, ought to remember, that the easiest way to attain them, is to be content with few things. I affirm further, That for a man to be clearly exempted from necessity, all he has to do, is to forbear desiring any thing.

XXXI.

in
are
hey
ere-
fine,
er to
are
who
sign
empt
at to
o at-
few
for a
n ne-
rbear

I Cannot deny but that health is a great good, yet would I have all acknowledge that sickness is not a very great evil. This teaches men to know themselves, whereas health deceives them, by making them imagine they shall never dye. Is it any evil for one to know by experience, that he is a man? How many, think you, are now very well, who yet are nearer death, than some that are given over by the Physicians? Do we not daily see, That some weak, tender, and infirm persons, live longer than others who seem to be of a most healthful constitution?

XXXII.

XXXI.

I Ife is a good, when it is well employ'd; Death never ought to be called a great evil, save only when a man has not lived well. Death is not a miscarriage, but a very
H natu-

natural thing. It has been a great misfortune to many, that they have lived long. He never dyes too soon, who has lived as a person of repute, and persisted in the exercise of Virtue.

XXXIII.

A Man does not lose his life, though death come sooner than he expected it; for he who affirms that he loses what he owes, seems willing absolutely to deny his debt, at the very time that he payes it. We come into the world by the portal of life, but upon condition that we should go out of it by that of death.

XXXIV.

WE should not stand so much in fear of death, since we dye daily. When a man dyes, he only ceases to live; and when he comes into the world, he begins to dye. To
say

say that we shall dye one day, is not a thing more certain than to affirm, that we shall dye every moment of our life. Would that man pass for a rational person, who should deny to do that once only, which he is continually doing? Fear not therefore to dye. If death surprize you in the flower of your age, it will bury a thousand Vices with you; if it delays its coming till old age, it will then deliver you out of many infirmities.

X X X V.

THe good there may be in honour is great or mean, answerably to what it is imagined. Make little account of opinion; esteem truth above all things: Never be disquieted at mens not-speaking advantageously of you, especially if they be ill-wishers, and such as indifferently revile on all sorts of persons. If they speak the truth, I think you have no reason to grumble or complain: If they do not,

148 Stoical Maximes.

not, they suffer by it more than you do; do not you therefore imitate them; and if you are sometimes forc'd to speak of them, do it in civil, honourable, and obliging terms. When they speak ill of you, you may easily slight their discourses, and not so much as reflect on them; but how much soever you may endeavour to content and pacifie them, you will never compass it.

XXXVI.

A Person who truly deserves to be commended, should never concern himself at mens not doing him that justice; but a man should ever beware desiring applause, when he conceives himself unworthy of it. It signifies little to commend a man, he is not the more virtuous for that; but it argues his effectually being such, when he deserves the approbation of good people. To commend a person who has neither virtue nor merit, amounts

amounts to as much as to put a filthy slurre upon him. Merit alone, without Elogies, is a rare virtue, and of great value. Envy fastens it self only on great and noble qualities.

X X X V I I.

YOur troubles will seem less burthen some to you, if you compare them with those of others. Are you desirous not to endure so much? Suffer with patience the disgraces that happen to you: if your frailty take their part against you, fortifie your own with reason. If those troubles happen through your own fault, receive them as a thing that was due to you; if you have not contributed thereto, be satisfi'd with the thought of your innocency, and forbear repining, lest you fall into some fault.

XXXVIII.

A Man who has lost what he much esteemed, and has not lost himself, has no great occasion to be afflicted; Riches had made him a lost man, had he not lost them. We commonly call that disgrace and misfortune, which is an excellent remedy for our evils; and we look on that as a very great loss, which many times is of great benefit to us. It may be said of a man that has lost his Goods, that he is also lost himself. We have known more people undone, because they had an Estate, than because they had absolutely lost all. 'Tis the part of a Robber to take away what is another mans; To secure ones treasures with much disquiet, is the business of a covetous person. To beg Money, argues Poverty; To be afflicted at the want of it, argues the condition of a miserable person. I know too well, that a man thinks himself unfortunate,

fortunate, when he finds himself despoiled of all he has, be it by what accident soever; but I know also, that he is deceived, and that he has no cause to complain, for what he looks on as an insupportable disgrace, is commonly the source of his happiness.

XXXIX.

IT argues little judgment in us, to be out of humour, because something has happened to us contrary to our expectation. We should not have hoped to obtain that which no-body had promised us. We are not certain, we are not secured of any thing in this world. 'Tis the ordinary style, and the most common and most generally-received Law amongst men, every moment almost for us to see things which disturb us. Which way soever we turn our selves, we meet with nothing but disgraces and misfortunes, which men must work

H 4 their.

their way through, though ever so unwilling to do it. Has any one among us been promis'd an uninterrupted happiness, without the intermixture of any misfortune? In the disgraces that have happen'd to you, never consider the loss they have caus'd you, but reflect only on the danger you have avoided, inasmuch as he who has lost all he was possess'd of, has yet some reason to be comforted, nay, indeed to rejoyce, since he was not lost himself with his wealth.

X L.

YOU ought not to account things ever the better, because you have earnestly desir'd them. Trouble, many times, is the fruit and result of desire, and a man may be happy in not-obtaining all he wishes. Be mistrustful of your will; it deceives the understanding, and it commonly mistakes in the choice it makes of things. 'Tis not inclination, but reason

son ought to be our directress in all sorts of occurrences.

XLI.

WE should not make any great account of any thing in this world, since they who are the most upright Judges thereof, declare, That it is more glorious to slight them, through greatness of courage; than for a man to acquire them by his own industry.

XLII.

Life, with sin, is a kind of death; without the pleasure attending sin, 'tis a tedious night; with joy, 'tis but an hours space; with cares and troubles, 'tis an age; with hope, 'tis a pleasant slumber, or rather a dream. In fine, to speak of Life as we ought to do, we should never call it by that name, save only when it has the attendance of virtue. Life seems very short to the fortunate,

H 5 and

154 Stoical Maximes.

and of a strange length to the miserable. The best dayes are soonest gone, and slide away imperceptibly.

XLIII.

HE that can well endure, may without difficulty overcome. To suffer and overcome, relate to the same Science. Patience is an admirable Mistress to teach both; and Fortune, with all her power, is obliged to yield to it.

XLIV.

AS all the other senses presuppose that of Touching, so do all the virtues presuppose patience; and we may say it is an unexhaustible source, whence all actions that have any thing of goodness in them, take their rise.

XLV.

VHo desires to find but little trouble in the labour he is unwillingly oblig'd to go through, must seek it at the forementioned Mistress; for a man more willingly and readily endures an evil whereto he has been already accustomed. Experience does not only contribute to the acquirement of prudence in a man, but it promotes also his attaining of patience.

XLVI.

TAke a fancy to have but few things, and you will find in the misery of others a rich treasure for your self. Poverty is not a virtue; only the love of poverty deserves that noble name.

XLVII.

XLVII.

A Man will find Poverty a most cruel Enemy, when he has no affection at all for it: for not to mention the inconveniences attending it, it opens a gap to many other disastrous evils. Necessity and shame are two inexhaustible sources of evils and misfortunes.

XLVIII.

THough Riches consider'd in themselves are not evil, yet are they alwayes very dangerous, and consequently deserve to be slighted. Fire is good for a hundred things, but not amidst a great heap of Powder. The same may be said of Riches, they become evil as soon as the Will fixes it self upon them.

X L I X.

Gold causes strange disorders, when it does not fall into good hands. Would you know when it is good? when a man is at a distance from it. If he who is its Master be desirous to make any advantage of it, the onely way is presently to be rid of it. Another thing may be said upon this subject of Gold, is, That the person who refuses it, deserves no less applause, than he who would give it.

L.

TWas not ill said of Riches, when one called them Fortune's vomit: now certain it is, that what comes up out of the entrails with any violence, is already spoiled and corrupted; whence it comes, that the least queasy-stomack'd cannot look on it without horreur.

L I.

COnsider all the goods of this world as meer Casualties ; No man can brag that Fortune has any dependance on him. We should never put virtue into the rank of our goods, unless we have acquired it. Never say, I have lost such a thing, for you have nothing but what's borrowed. If any of your Children dye, bewail him not as if he were lost ; but think it enough to say, I have restored him to him, to whom he belonged. Be chearful, rather than afflicted, when all you have is taken away from you ; for then you will be out of all debt.

L I I.

IT matters not how the Creditor got the money due to him, provided he demand nothing of his Debtor. You are not to look on the person whom God hath appointed to
resume

resume what you ought him ; stand not to examine whether that person have good or bad qualities, or whether he has any aversion for you ; is it not enough for you to be assur'd, that being much indebted, your Creditor does not demand any thing further from you ?

LIII.

HE is an absolute Lord and Master, who acts and appoints things according, or contrary, to his inclination ; yet can you not exercise that power, but only over the actions which proceed from virtue, for it does not extend to the goods receiv'd from Fortune : for a man to persist obstinately in a desire of being master thereof, argues him to be in a disposition, in a short time, to become their slave.

L I V.

TWere a great act of wisdom, and withal an extraordinary happiness, if you could put your self into such a posture as never come to any disgrace. And yet this is in your power; all you have to do, is to turn the most disastrous accidents to your own advantage, and derive good from evil. Let it be your constant persuasion, that, sin excepted, there is no evil but has somewhat of good lying concealed under its bark.

L V.

IAm confident you would not be rich, conditionally to be withal a slave, since that of all the goods that can be enjoyed in this world, there's none countervails liberty. Tell me then, which of the two liberties you would rather lose, that of the body, or that of the mind? You will answer, That no doubt the slavery of the

the heart is a thousand times worse, than that of the body. I grant it ; but must tell you withal, That the true liberty of the heart cannot be obtained, otherwise than by a generous contempt of wealth.

LVI.

REmember you are a man , and rank whatever happens to you, what nature soever it be of, amongst things incident to Humanity. Prepare your self to work your way through a million of disgraces , and be no more startled when they shall happen, than you are when you reflect on the like in other men. Are you dangerously wounded in the hand or arm ? Others have been lam'd as well as you, and that accident is at most but a disparagement.

LVII.

LVII.

BEware of desiring every thing that you are pleas'd withal; you must look on the means as well as the end. There are some very pleasant and delightful places in the world, where no-body dares go, because the way to them is rough and difficult. I would have that which you desire to be perfectly good; yet if there be a necessity, for the obtaining of it, to do any thing that is unhandsome, and that much trouble is to be gone through, it is my advice, that you think no more of it.

LVIII.

TO judge rightly of affliction, you must look on it as the principle and beginning of a very great good, and not as an evil. Be not frightned at the appearance of it: the greatest Gyant is much less than a Fly, when he begins to be fram'd in his mothers womb.

LIX.

LIX.

NEver comply with the sentiment of the Populace, and measure not things according to the common opinion. 'Tis a great mistake, to infer that a man is very happy, and well in health, because he is jocund and chearful: nor are you to have a conceit, that he is sick, or in some discontent, because he is melancholy, and out of humour. There's nothing more ordinary in the use of things, than disguise and personation. Do we not daily see an infinite number of persons that are dejected and sad in the midst of Honours and Wealth, and others who make an open discovery of a frolick humour, though they are in extreme necessity?

L X:

BEfore you judge of a thing, consider the end well. You may safely call a thing good, when it is such in its end, though at first it seems not to be so; and reject as an evil thing what is not good in its end, though it has a plausible beginning. According to this account, you are not much to esteem all the things of this world, since they are so near their end. The goods of this life are less considerable upon the score of their multitude, than upon that of their continuance.

L X I.

Good, if we strictly consider it, consists in action; Virtue is a good that has no dependance on Fortune, and such as Envy cannot fasten on it. Endeavour to become master of that good; I assure you that you may do it: yet since no-body can give you

you that treasure, you must not envy those that have found it. What kindness soever a man may have receiv'd from Fortune, he is not, upon that score, ever the more happy, and his apparent felicity should not raise any jealousy in your Soul; be inclin'd rather to commiserate him, and bemoan his being expos'd to the humorous traverses and insolence of Fortune.

LXII.

VWhen you shall see a man extremely rich, and in good plight, beware of accounting him happy; say rather out of a sentiment of compassion; Alas! he is not far from his ruine, at least he is menac'd with some great misfortune; and if he live long, he must force his way through many disgraces. A man is not the mark of all those troublesome accidents, when he is in a mean condition, and has but little about him. I am content there should be some
advan-

advantage, nay, solidity in the goods which may be acquir'd upon earth; yet will it still be truly affirm'd, that they are not to be esteem'd, since they are nothing else but the occasions of all our evils, and the source of all our disgraces.

LXIII:

YOU will never slight or envy a man, if instead of reflecting on his present condition, you seriously consider what he sometime was, or what he may yet be. Is he now very rich? He may be poor. Is he advanc'd to one of the highest charges in the Kingdom? It may be you will find him ere long amongst Malefactors in a Prison. Slight him not if he be in necessity; for you will stand in need of his favour, when Fortune shall have re-advanc'd him.

LXIV.

IF you take it unkindly to be deny'd what might be easily granted to a Flatterer, you are no better than he; at least your complaint is not very reasonable. Are you yet ignorant, that the things of this world are never bestow'd for nothing, but, on the contrary, that they are alwayes dearly sold, and that the Coyn that's most current amongst men, is Flattery? If you have not proffer'd it to any one, why do you think it much, that you have nothing given you? And if you have made use of it as well as others, why do you not endeavour by a sincere repentance, to cleanse your self of the fault you have committed?

L X V.

IN bargaining, one gives, the other receives something ; but he who buyes nothing, keeps what he had. Complain not that you are deny'd what is not ordinarily granted but to Crimes. Content your self with what you were possess'd of before, and think it enough that you are not become wicked. 'Tis no small advantage to you, that you have preserv'd your self in so great a corruption, and that you had been able to flight what had only the appearance of good.

L X V I.

HE must be a Fool, who sells himself to buy a garment ; how then dare you deliver up your mind to satisfie your body ? Whoever is disquieted for the accommodations and enjoyments of the body , is already a slave to what he wishes. You have

have but your desert, when, for having over-pamper'd your Body, your Soul is reduc'd to a shameful slavery.

LXVII.

THere's nothing more admirable, or more worthy the esteem of all sorts of persons, than a generous Soul that resolutely rejects applause, and is not so injurious to that virtue, as to serve it upon the score of interest or design. You cannot find any thing greater among men, than a noble, generous, and transcendent mind, which wisely despises what most others are dazled and charm'd withal. Now thus does he demean himself, who flights Honour, and cannot endure the incense of Flatterers.

LXVIII.

THe goods of this life are like Nettles, which, in their verdure, make a delightful prospect at a distance, but sting their hands who
I touch

touch them. What we desire, or hope, seems perfectly good to us, while it is at a distance; but when we have it in our hands, it wounds us to the very heart.

L X I X.

A Fool is always desiring, and does not so much as consider what is within his power, though ordinarily it be something better than what he pretends to. Thus such persons enjoy not any thing, while they are desirous of all. Desires oppose one another, and are in a cruel War, in order to their mutual destruction.

L X X.

IT is a hard matter to obtain that which many persons wish; but I conceive it also as difficult, to preserve it after it has been obtain'd. The great number of Competitors does many times obstruct mens compassing their designs; but that of the
Envious

Envious troubles and disturbs a man in his possession. In fine, the more one desires a thing, the further he is from it.

LXXI.

Take here in few words, the character of a wise man, and the exact idea which may be given of him. He should be willing to have a thing, without desiring it; Fear nothing, and be in a continual state of precaution; be contented, and avoid pleasure; not love any thing but what is conformable to reason; provide for whatever is necessary, and yet never be disquieted; not take any divertisement, but what's consistent with decency; not be afflicted, but when he has committed some fault; though he ought not to be chargeable with that, since he makes it his profession to follow reason in all things.

LXXII.

A Good man has this advantage, that he thinks himself happy amidst the greatest torments; and certainly he is not deceiv'd. Whatever cannot blemish his virtue, he does not account any evil. Sin is the only thing he fears: he constantly suffers punishment, he shuns pleasure; he with a generous contempt surveys the extent of Fortune's Territories, and he opposes all her power, without any other relief, than what he derives from his own patience and courage.

LXXIII.

BE alwayes vigilant against the most unwelcome and unexpected accidents, and order your self so, as that all the misfortunes that can happen, may, rather prevent your will, than your judgment. The wisest of all Mortals, do what he can, cannot plead an exemption from the disgraces

Stoical Maximes. 173

ces and misfortunes of this life ; but he has this more than others, that he is never surpriz'd. Do not determine any thing, without this additional Clause, *If some traverse of Fortune do not hinder me.* It is good not to fear Fortune, but it is good also to prevent her ; that so a man be not the Butt of her humerous counter-changes.

LXXIV.

IF it happen that things prove not so ill as you thought they would have done, though the success be not fully according to your desire, yet that little disgrace will give you some affliction. When a man does not promise himself any success, a man is the less discontented to find himself deceiv'd by his own desires.

LXXV.

THink rather on what may, than on what ordinarily does happen ; that's the true way to live in
1 3 much

much tranquillity. For as men do more chearfully support an evil they have been accustom'd to ; so are they less surpriz'd at an accident, how dismal soever it may be, when by foresight they have prepar'd themselves for the reception of it. They who take a Voyage, though the weather be fair, and no likelihood of danger at that time, will nevertheless provide the ship with all things necessary to save themselves from a wrack, in case a Tempest should rise. Thus ought a prudent man to do; while good Fortune favours him, he prepares himself for the entertainment of the bad.

L X X V I.

Since 'tis thought a kind of liberty to obey a wise man, it must also be said, that it is a kind of servitude to have the government of immodest and impudent persons. A Fool is tormented with two strange evils; the one, that he is a Fool; the other, that

that he supplies the want of judgment with ill nature. For as a discreet man does by his good conduct supply whatever else is wanting to him; so he who wants conduct and discretion, pieces out that want with the malignancy of his mind.

L X X V I I.

A *Aristotle* wisely observ'd, That it was the property of Fools to be alwayes judging of all sorts of things; to determine hastily without consulting reason, not to make use of present goods, and never to study the knowledge of what may make a man happy in this world. I shall add to the reflection of that great person, that there is no folly like that of a man, who, being not ignorant in what the good and felicity of this life consists, yet leads a very irregular life.

LXXVIII.

Perfect wisdom does not so much consist in diving into the highest Sciences, as in framing a correspondency in a man's designs, words, and all his enterprizes. 'Tis a great mark of wisdom, for a man to embrace only that which is good in it self, instead of trifling away his time in discovering the mysteries and secrets of Nature; to moderate the impetuous sallies of the passions, instead of making fruitless speculations, and undesign'd discourses; to study the art of Self-content, and to desie all dependance on Fortune.

LXXIX.

I Account that man happy, who wants fewer things to live quietly, and with pleasure, than he does, simply to live. To live, he stands in need of sustenance, rayment, and several other things: to live contentedly,
it

it suffices that he have a transcendent Soul, which indifferently contemplates good and bad Fortune, which esteems only that which is to last eternally, which does her utmost to become like God, and finds her repose, joy, and felicity, in the contempt she makes of all the goods dependent on Fortune.

LXXX.

TIs more easie than it is imagin'd, for a man to become master of all the world; 'tis but to slight all, and make an excellent use of things. The excellency of a Demefne is to be computed by the profit issuing out of it: now it is manifest, that no man makes a better use of, and derives a greater advantage from, all the things in this world, than he, who, upon the account of virtue, despises them.

LXXXI.

ALl wicked men are slaves, only the virtuous man is perfectly free. Can any one imagine a more absolute liberty than that which you enjoy, when no-body can hinder you from living as you please your self? A Libertine is far from being so happy as you are, for he is engag'd by an unhappy necessity to obey his passions, and to suffer himself to be sway'd by the most infamous Vices. The Laws forbid him to seek what he desires, and he has not the freedom so much as to wish that which is good, since his being reduc'd to a slavery to his own lewd inclinations. But nothing can obstruct his desires and enterprises, who has embrac'd the party of virtue; he wholly cleaves to that which is of good repute, and alwayes follows reason, as the rule of his actions and comportment.

LXXXII.

LXXII.

THere's no liberty like that of a man who is accustom'd to will only what God wills ; nothing happens to him contrary to his will, and he executes all his designs, notwithstanding the strongest oppositions. A man is absolutely master of himself, when, instead of making things violently comply with his humour, he can accommodate his gust and inclinations to the things themselves. Is it not an argument of great liberty, that a man can absolutely dispose of himself?

LXXIII.

Is a vain brag, to say, that you are a King ; if you be not virtuous, you are a slave : but if you are a good and just man, you are truly a King, though engag'd by your condition to wait on others. The voluptuous person is not a slave to one man,

man, but to many vices; the virtuous man has an absolute jurisdiction over his own heart, and has the privilege to assume the title of King over all his passions. What do you call reigning, but to be invested with a great power not deriv'd from any other person? And where, think you, that is to be found? Ask the famous *Chrysippus*, and he will tell you, that that sovereign authority is invested in persons endow'd with perfect wisdom.

LXXXIV.

Patience has an admirable faculty in retorting injuries, and charity hinders a man from doing them to any one. If your Soul be so rightly byas'd, as not to esteem any thing in this world but virtue only, you will not be much sensible of affronts and injuries, and the most disastrous accidents will not shake your constancy, nor will you look on them any longer

as

as evils. Never concern your self at another's speaking evil of you ; in fine, if you are truly wise , you will never be alarm'd, unless it be when you shall find your self chargeable with some fault.

LXXXV.

MAke it not your business to please all People, only endeavour to imitate those who are truly-wise, and consummate in virtue. Do you what is incumbent on you , and let people grumble as they please. For my part, I think it a great commendation not to please the vicious : consider well who they are who approve what you do ; it is much better to be pleasing to one single person, provided he be virtuous, and knows how to discern things aright, than a great number of people corrupted by vice. I have learnt this lesson of one of the Oracles of Philosophy, That a good and virtuous man is not absolutely happy,

happy, if he be not slighted by the common sort of people.

LXXXVI.

A Custom your self to do well upon all occasions; there's nothing more dearly kept up than esteem. Of all diseases, there's none so hardly curable as that of reputation, especially when it has been already blasted. Reputation is not acquir'd without happiness; but for the preservation of it, a man must be very expert, and not spare any trouble or care.

LXXXVII.

A Virtuous man may be innocently reveng'd of his enemies, by persisting in well-doing, and a wicked man, by reforming his life. O happy revenge! since it is of very great advantage to the one, and does not hurt the others.

LXXXVIII.

LXXXVIII.

IF what is said of you be consonant to Truth, entertain it as an advertisement of great importance. If it be a falshood, never be troubled at it, and assure your self, that Calumny will but augment your Reputation. It will alwayes be a glory to you, that your enemy was forc'd to make use of detraction and imposture, as having not found any thing he could justly blame in your demeanour and conduct.

LXXXIX.

Side not with your enemy, by taking too much to heart the things he publishes against you; for he sayes them only to make you angry; and it is not his design to make you a better man, by discovering his animosity against you; but all his pretence is only to molest and disturb you. Be therefore reveng'd of him, since it is
in.

284 Stoical Maximes.

in your power to do so; and to frustrate him of his expectation, correct your own miscarriages, be not incens'd at him, and slight his injuries.

X C.

WHen you see things are past all remedy, endeavour as to your part to redress them as much as you can, in moderating your discontent by the contempt of the very thing which occasion'd it; or by a serious reflection on the damage which may attend a violent affliction. If the evil be remediless, beware of despair: the malice of men may reduce us to very great extremities, out of which there may be no hopes of recovery; but 'tis we our selves only are capable of depriving our passions of the remedies which are proper for them.

XCI:

A Nger does it self more hurt than is imagin'd, for it deprives it self of reason and sound apprehension, when it stands in greatest need of them. You will grant me, that there is a necessity of much penetration and judgment, to get ones self out of a great danger, as well as to be exempted from Folly : tell me then, I pray, whether we can possibly conceive a greater danger, or a more remarkable extravagance, than for a man to run the hazard of losing his life, to satisfy his revenge.

XCII:

W Hen you have troubled and turmoyl'd your self long to pitch upon a time fit for revenge, and yet meet with great obstacles to your design, what have you gain'd but much discontent, exasperation, and despight ? It may be further added, that

that you have given your enemy a fair occasion to be reveng'd of you ; so that the same thing becomes your punishment, and your revenge.

XCIII.

ARe you reduc'd to Poverty? You ought to take comfort, because you shall live in safety ; whereas they who are Rich, have alwayes occasion to tremble, finding themselves expos'd to a thousand dreadful occurrences: 'Twas well enough that you had the one in exchange for the other ; but your lot is yet the better, since Poverty, and the other miseries and inconveniences of this life, signifie almost nothing, in comparison of the disastrous misfortunes which perpetually threaten the Rich.

XCIV.

RId your self as soon as you can of those kinds of things, which being preserv'd with too much tenderness, a

derness, are as if they were lost. Gold is like a malignant humour, that should be suddenly dry'd up and consum'd, to prevent approaching death. They are guilty of a strange unfaithfulness in point of stewardship towards God, who do not employ their superfluous goods in the relief of the poor and miserable. Know, that what is superfluous belongs to them, and that God has not entrusted you with it, but to relieve them in their exigencies.

X C V.

I Know not whether there be any Folly equal to that of a man, who, desirous to establish himself in a perfect independency, and not to be subject to any-body, thinks it the right way to attain that end, to become a slave to wealth. One man may, without any infamy, obey another man; but it must ever be ignominious, for a man to be a Captive to a metal.

XCVI.

XCVI.

Ambitious men, who would have a sovereignty over others, never mind that they are slaves to their own passions, and that they obey I know not how many Vices. Whoever thinks to rely on Fortune, will not go very far under so weak a protection; it would be more honourable, and more for his advantage, to take Virtue for his Conductress. A virtuous man cannot avoid being a happy man; and he will always be in great authority, while he keeps an absolute supremacy over his heart and his passions.

XC VII.

A Man ought not to fear the powerfulness and insolence of Fortune, when he is but in a mean condition. 'Tis better for him not to be expos'd to so many dangers, than to have much superfluity. We could
instance

instance in abundance of persons, who receive excessive favours from Fortune; and yet, how profuse soever she may be, it is not in her power to satisfy a man who desires more than is requisite. He who will mis-spend his money, has not any in bank. 'Tis a vast charge to nurse up, and keep a Vice.

XC VIII.

YOU vainly flatter your self with the conceit of being a virtuous man, meerly because you have endur'd contempt. You have at most but equalled your patience to that of an ambitious person, who makes no difficulty to overcome a Thousand disgraces to compass his end. Do you expect to be commended, because your Virtue is very much like the Vice of another? Alas! what meanness of spirit must it needs argue in a man, not to be willing to endure more, in order to the obtaining

ing of an eternal reward, than the followers of the world for the acquirement of Honours and Transitory Goods ?

XCIX.

IT is much better not to be subject to Discontent, than to receive much Consolation. All the joyes in the world cannot take one grey hair out of our heads ; but there needs only some disturbances of mind, and a little melancholy, to make us hoary before our time. That man must have a great stock of recollection and wisdom, who is never troubled at any thing, and can live contentedly in a general privation of those pleasures and enjoyments, which most people do over-earnestly covet.

C.

MEn complain and repine in bad Fortune, and they are insolent and insupportable in good Fortune.
There's

There's no condition but is subject to some Vice, save only that which imitates Virtue, keeping constantly the middle, and carefully declining from all the extremes. You see then, that it is not so difficult, as 'tis commonly imagin'd, to acquire Virtue; all that a man has to do, is to support bad Fortune without Repining, and to live in Prosperity without Arrogance.

FINIS.
